

Search For Yesterday

A History of Levy County, Florida



Chapter Sixteen



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DEDICATION



Norene Andrews is a native of Massena, a small town in upper New York State. She lives near Bronson, is married to Rex Andrews, serves as Librarian for the town of Bronson, and is treasurer of the Levy County Archives. She is a Charter Member of the Archives Committee and has steadily contributed to the research and publication of *Search for Yesterday*. She wrote Chapter Four.

This Chapter is dedicated to Norene Andrews, with affection, a sentiment obviously endorsed by the two horses.

The Levy County Archives Committee

INTRODUCTION

Recently, it was my pleasure to examine and read a scrapbook collection of a series of articles which appeared in **The Chiefland Citizen** several years ago under the sponsorship of **The Levy County State Bank**. Now this wonderful series was written by our talented Sidney Gunnell and was entitled **Search for Yesterday**. In case you have not noticed, our Levy County series derived its name from the newspaper series.

As I sat and enjoyed rereading those old articles, I realized that we simply **must** put some of them into booklet form to be preserved in the Archives series. The time and effort (not to mention the delightful writing style of one Sidney Gunnell) which had been

spent in researching each topic must not be wasted!

At first, Sidney was reluctant to reprint the material due to something called modesty; however, when the matter was presented to the Archives Committee and wholeheartedly endorsed, he relaxed and gave his approval. So, with the approval of one Sidney Gunnell and **The Levy County State Bank**, we present the earlier form of **Search for Yesterday** especially for **YOU** to enjoy in booklet form.

All of the articles in this chapter were written in 1976 by Sidney Gunnell except where otherwise noted.

Kathryn P. Harris, Member
Levy County Archives

OLD ROADS AND PEOPLE

At the November 2, 1850, meeting of the Levy County Commission, a road was "ordered the most direct way" from Fort Fanning to Fort Jennings, and to pass through specified lands, the owners of which are listed. Fort Jennings was on the Wacassassa River about a mile upstream from today's Highway 19-98. By consulting a county map and assuming that the land owners are listed in geographical order, a rough idea of where these people lived can be seen. Here is the list for that road, using their spelling: Thomas C. Barrow, Thomas Love, Robert Waterston, Simeon Harvey, John Filchete, Benjamin Brownlove, David Brownlove, Henry Lancaster, I. P. Hardee, Silvester Bryant, Sr., Silvester Bryant, Jr., George H. Fresper, William Mayo.

Some of these family names vanished. Others have developed a migratory habit; they moved to other parts of Florida. The rest stayed on and descendants are living in the area today. Some of the names reappeared in other parts of the state, the Shands and Sebring families of Bronson for example. The Worthington family settled at Worthington Springs long enough to name the place, then migrated into this area.

Another road in 1850 went from Zachariah Davis' place (I believe he lived at Levyville) to Cedar Keys. It passed through these lands: Samuel M. Clyate, Jackson Clyate, John Waterston, L. Moore, A. J. Smith, Walter L. Fesper, C. Hunter, A. Jones, J. C. Daniels, James Daniels, L. J. Walker, James C. Basco, Thomas Parsons, Isiah Oglisby (probably Oglesby), William Wilson, John Miller, Joseph Cavop (?), Peter Welch, E. H. Richards, A. Steele. I doubt such a name as Cavop but I still do not know what the recorder intended.

The spelling of a name in a specific entry does not necessarily mean that the name was spelled exactly that way at that time. The person writing the minutes may have been spelling the names phonetically and that was the best he could do. Many family names were warped out of shape in the old days in just that way. By the same token, the spelling would vary from one month to the next. Too, the minutes were something recorded in almost indecipherable writing and some of the ink used has almost faded away.

Still in 1850, another road left Levyville going toward Judson. I do not find the place name Judson listed that far back; I am using the name to identify the area. The land owners along that road were: Willis Medlin, Aaron Weeks, Edward Weeks, E. M. Studstile, Simion Lee, Joseph Wilkerson, John R. Hatcher, William R. Hatcher, Daniel A. Morgan.

The road went on to "Joppa in Alachua County" which was later to become Trenton in Gilchrist County. There is still a Joppa Church in Northeast Levy County. It must be an old church.

Two nieces of mine, Lisa and Theresa McKoy of Gainesville are descendants of the Willis Medlin. The Wikerson name had to be Wilkerson and is simply

spelled incorrectly. The Hatcher must be the same people whose descendants operated a retail store in Bronson until about twenty years ago. The name Studstile is the Studstill name of today.

In July, 1850, the commission designated voting precincts: "house of J. F. Thompson in Wekives Hammock, Hatcher's place at the courthouse, Margaret Blanton's house at Clay Landing, Cedar Key at "the usual place on said island". I wish the old scribe had identified "the usual place on said island." Wekiva was also spelled Weciva and Weakiva. I think the Wekiva Hammock referred to an area southwest of Coulter's bridge and was one of the very old settlements in Levy County. The fragments of tableware and glass I found there are certainly ancient enough. When they used the term courthouse, they meant the land on which they planned to construct a building. There was no courthouse in 1850. The commission met at various residences, some of which are listed.

In November, 1850, the road to "Z. Davis's to Newmansville" passed by or through the property of John P. Webster, Sebastian Tomlinson, William Buie, Daniel B. Hogans, Stephen W. Hogans, William Tomlinson.

In June, 1852, the election precincts were reshuffled. A new one, the Judson area, was at the house of Joseph J. Private (Prevatt). The same year, they mention Highsmith's Store as being on the road from Clay Landing to Levyville. Wouldn't it be interested to find out just where Highsmith's Store was? The site may be in a present day pasture, or woods, or a present day residence may be built on the exact site. What if you happen to be living in that house and one moonlit night there comes a soft knock on your door? You open your door and there stands an old bewhiskered type holding a six foot long muzzle loader and he politely says he wishes to buy a plug of "Chawin Terbacky"--then you become aware that the moonlight is shining through him. I don't know what you would do, but I would set a new speed record going down that old road to Clay Landing.

In April, 1854, some of the courthouse lots (that subdivision again) were sold. The purchasers were: Daniel A. Morgan, John C. Calhoun, N. L. Turner, J. J. Gillette, P. H. Davis, William Hunt, J. Wikerson, W. R. Medlin, John R. Hatcher, Isaac Highsmith, Robert Waterston. In July, 1857, they "determined that the said W. R. Medlin bid off lot No. 8 in a state of intoxication", so the transaction was voided and the lot was taken back for future sale.'

In 1854, they mention "Joseph Everett's ferry on the Withlacoche". Everett's ferry keeps turning up for years afterwards. It is to wonder if anyone knows where the ferry was. The Blind Horse Ferry existed many years later, no connection. There is mention of A. B. Sanchez living in Wekiva Hammock.

THE CIVIL WAR, HERE

The Confederates fought savagely and valiantly. They were out-numbered three to one, they had no Navy, no metal industries; by any logic that war should have been over within six months. It took four years to beat them and it took their own kind to do it. They came from a very tough racial stock that was not noted for losing. With all the odds stacked against them, even so, the Confederates came unbelievably close to winning.

The stories told of their prisons, such as Andersonville, follow the usual propaganda patterns (such as telling only one side of an event). The Confederate captors at Andersonville did their best for the Union prisoners. They just had nothing to do with. Actually, percentage-wise, more Confederates died in Union prisons than the other way around.

At the same time, the North was more magnanimous in victory than is usually conceded. Of course there were exceptions, there always are. We must not let exceptions cloud our view of the overall scene. Remember, this was brother fighting brother. We are still brothers.

Another bit of dramatized propaganda we get is that the cause of this war was to abolish slavery. Not so; slavery was clearly on the way out when the war began. Am I expected to believe that Sherman's scorched-earth march through Georgia (after the South was beaten) had anything to do with abolishing slavery? No way. The Civil War was fought over the same two points of contention that most wars are fought over, money and power; which brings General Sherman's march into sharper perspective, along with the South's draft law wherein a wealthy type could buy his way out of conscription, legally.

The greed for money and the lust for power is something to behold--and a lot of men died. That war should have never happened. The Negro people in this country would have been infinitely better off, say forty years later, without that war. So would have everyone else.

Now, I am not a Civil War buff--I am not even an academic historian. There are some very able social studies teachers in Dixie, Gilchrist, and Levy Counties and this is their field. Mr. Doyle McCall at Chiefland, for instance, has forgotten more about this sort of thing than I know.

Back to the Confederates, their place in history is solid and their heritage is a proud and noble one. I view with intense contempt the efforts of some sorry creep (usually with no heritage of his own) to besmirch a thing that he doesn't even understand. I have the same intensity of contempt for those who show disrespect for the flag of the United States.

As for this area, the following quotes from the old county records speak for themselves. In some other framework, the spelling would be ludicrous, but this is not funny. What I see is the pathos and sadness of a suffering, beleaguered people.

MARCH, 1880: Election of military officers to be held near the ford of Otter Creek known as the lower ford.

SEPTEMBER, 1861: "We recommend that the citizens of Levy County pay an extra tax to wit 18 percent ad valorem for the purpose of raising funds for the Soldiers belonging to the 2nd Regiment Florida Volunteers."

JULY, 1862: "Received from David L. Yulee one hundred dollars for the relief of Soldiers wives who may be in needs whose husband is now in the Service of the Confederate States or who may have died or been killed in Said Service."

JANUARY, 1863: Justices of Peace to canvass the county for the number of soldiers' families and disabled soldiers.

JUNE, 1863: "Ordered that we each take a portion of the county and draw a portion of the relief funds and attend to the wants of those who are in need."

JULY, 1863: Silas Scarborough went to Gainesville to obtain relief funds.

JANUARY, 1864: Silas Scarborough fired, replaced by T. N. Clyatt. John J. Jackson is appointed "agent for procuring provisions and care of the Soldiers families of Levy County."

FEBRUARY, 1864: "Ordered that the County Commissioners meet at Bronson for the purpose of distributing corn to the most needy."

OCTOBER, 1864: They were buying corn for the soldiers families.

DECEMBER, 1864: They lost the list of soldiers families.

JANUARY, 1865: Justices of the Peace ordered to assemble a new list.

MAY, 1865: Potatoes were furnished a Mrs. Beck out of the soldiers' relief fund.

FEBRUARY, 1866: George S. Leavitt, Clerk of the Court, was authorized to procure new books for his office "to replace those destroyed."

FEBRUARY, 1866: "That no debts contracted by the county during the late war and yet unpaid--shall be paid--and that all persons who may be indebted to the county--which indebtedness originated between the

10th day of January, 1861, and the 25th day of October, 1865, shall be released from payment of the same."

MAY, 1866: Revoked "certain license to carry fire arms for Pompey Ance Edwards and Morris Freedman."

JUNE, 1866: A list of indigent soldiers, their widows and orphans: George W. Hopkins and one child, Lewis Apple (an adult), Jesse Lofton, Phebe Strawn (widow of James Strawn and three children), Silas Weeks, P. A. Parish (widow of T. J. Parrish and nine children), Matildee Garner (widow of James C. Thomas and four children). Misiah Whirter (widow of Daniel Whirter and three children), the three orphan children of J. R.

Hatcher, Margaret Corregan (widow of Owen Corregan).

DECEMBER, 1867: "Certain families said to be in a state of sufferance and starvation."

And for years afterwards they doled out what they could to the war widows, orphans and disabled veterans. They also issued script (sort of an I.O. U.) to pay the county debts, but would not accept their own script in payment of taxes. There was some military action of a minor nature in the vicinity. Maybe I will write of that later, but for now, I stand looking back over the years at the old ones during the days of the Confederacy, and I stand in sadness and respect.

SAGA OF A JUG

Somewhere, the jug was made. The clay mix was shaped, fired and glazed, with the customer's business name and address imprinted on its side. That first event required some amount of skill and artistry within itself. After all, not just anyone knows how to make a jug. I don't. Then some distillery filled it with whiskey and it came down the Mississippi River on one of Mark Twain's big stern wheeler steamboats. It could have been hauled down the Illinois Central Railroad right through the county in Mississippi where I was destined to be born forty years later (make it fifty), but old trains were more prone to break jugs than old steamboats so I say the river was more likely.

At any rate, we place the jug in the wholeseller's warehouse in New Orleans. In case you have difficulty reading the company name in the picture, it is King and Saint, 210-212 S Peters St., New Orleans, La. Now, if I were really gungo about this, I should find that address in New Orleans, see what is there today, and question a few elderly Cajuns about the history of that site. However, attempts to communicate with elderly Cajuns may produce mutual confusion and prove to be fruitless. Whatever you do, don't write a letter over there to that address or the Postal Service may also get confused.

One day, the wholesaler received an order, our jug was trundled out along with some others and loaded aboard another steamer. This craft would more likely be a side-wheeler, more compatible with the Gulf Waves than a stern-drive. The side-wheeler pulled into Cedar Key and tied up at the docks, where some of the cargo was unloaded. Our jug was stowed aboard a box car on the line of the Atlantic Florida and India Transit Company. In those days the track looped out on the dock.

The little wood-burner steam locomotive moved out with a melodious whistle blast and headed northeast across Levy County. Our jug was unloaded at the Bronson Depot and landed in a Bronson salon. For awhile it went glug-glug until all the whiskey was gone, all the beards wiped, and all the staggering done. I could give you the probable name of the barkeeper but I won't.

Our jug, now empty, landed at the residence of Britt Lewis and his wife, Americus (she was a Smith) which was on present-day Highway 337, about seven miles south of Bronson. It could have been used for syrup storage, but considering its size, it might have been used as a water container. Anyway, it was finally broken into many small fragments. The fragments were thrown over the backyard fence as was anything else to be discarded.

For many years the fragments lay there, some of them became covered by dirt and leaves. The seasons came and passed, forest fires burned across the spot, the two old people were murdered late one afternoon. They came home and surprised a couple of robbers.

The next morning, a posse was on the scene, closely scrutinizing a footprint left by one of the suspects, when a man noticed that the tracks being made by a posse member matched the footprint left by the suspect. That's how the case was broken, or how the solution started.

Other people lived in the house, more years passed, days of hot sunshine, storms, the times of grey winter mists and chill, and finally the house was gone. The area slowly reverted to forest, the boots of hunters trod across the spot where the old jug's fragments lay and more time passed.

The day came when I stood there and noticed the fragments with lettering on them. I was curious about what the lettering would say and I collected all of the fragments that were visible. Now, a whole group of other people appeared on the scene.

At the time I was a teacher at Chiefland and one of my classes was an eighth grade English section. They were to become the graduating class of 1973 from Chiefland High School. I was introducing them to creative writing at this time, so I gave them the fragments, told them the background and suggested they could write impressionistic essays on the subject. They did so with gusto; in fact, I didn't realize what I had started. The next thing I knew, they had some glue and were reconstructing part of the jug. Next, they rather pointedly suggested that I fire up the motorcycle and go collect some more fragments. I did, three times. At first, the amazing skill they displayed in fitting the pieces together mystified me, until I realized that I was watching a bunch of professional jigsaw puzzle assemblers.

This went on for two months. The class moved on to other activities, but two or three of them (not always the same ones) would sit in a corner quietly working on their jug. Now and then one of the jug crew would jump up and deliver his contribution to the class discussion.

What a wonderful bunch of kids they were. The affectionate friendship they had for each other and for me will be a warm memory that I treasure for the rest of my life. The reconstruction of the old jug was a togetherness thing for them and me. Two of the boys rode their little motorcycles all the way from Chiefland to collect more fragments. They thought I might have missed some.

Those wonderful little kids grew up, graduated, and scattered, as adults will do. Even now, I can encounter one of them and he or she will inquire if I am taking proper care of "our old Jug". The relic you see in the picture is a symbol of something that all of us remember, a memento of their childhood.

So that old jug has been around. After reading this, you look at the picture again, and maybe your own visualization has been expanded.

This Saga of a Jug is dedicated to that class, with love.



The Lewis Jug, in reference to Saga of a Jug.

THE NIGHT THE STARS FELL ON LONG POND

There had to be some settlers around here as early as 1800. The early pioneers wandered into the area, cleared areas, built huts, and just lived there. They didn't necessarily own the land, so they didn't show up on government records - they left no "Official" tracks. But subsequent events could not have happened unless those earlier arrivals had already been established. The further back you go, the more tenuous the evidence becomes and documentation must be augmented by deductive reasoning.

If I may digress momentarily concerning the above mentioned hut, there are some misinformed types who label any frontier residence built of logs as being a cabin. A cabin is a one room affair. A cabin occupant with some social standing might add a porch in front and a shed-room in the rear. A log residence of some size with a central hall (sometimes called a dog trot) and a separate kitchen was a log house, not a cabin.

But back in 1800, we can read various accounts of what was happening in St. Augustine, Pensacola, Mobile, and be left with the impression that the Dixie, Levy and Gilchrist area was one big blank populated by Indians, rattlesnakes, bobcats, and a few happy gophers.

I see the logic of the situation as indicating that settlers were in the Cedar Key area and around Long Pond by 1800 and there is not one shred of evidence to the contrary known to me.

One night in 1809, the earth was swinging sedately along in its orbit when a massive cloud of meteors got in the way. Some of them (the Perseids, the Leonids, who knows?) were pulled out of their own orbits by the earth's gravitation and entered the atmosphere at terrific speeds. There would have been no astronomers nor other scientists down here then, just the adventurous pioneers. The pyrotechnic flashing and flaring all over the night sky must have been an awe-inspiring sight to behold. The older settlers would have called it a firestorm - one meteor was a shooting star.

A young man was riding his horse along a trail in the area west of Long Pond late that night, going home from a party at a neighbor's house. The meteor shower started. Some of these would have been of some size and the large ones make a hollow, eerie roar as they streak across. The horseman saw the sky light up and

heard the horrendous roars. He dismounted, tied his horse and calmly stood there waiting for the world to come to an end. For him that was the only logical conclusion to draw from what he was seeing and hearing. After about an hour the firestorm subsided, so he mounted his horse and rode home.

This legend was handed down through the successive generations of people in that area. I heard it from the late L. W. Drummond in about 1969. The point is, settlers had been here long enough to be having parties.

Over the years, Gulf Hammock hunters have found pieces of what must be molten splatters that sluffed off nickel-iron meteorities. I have one such fragment (somewhere). In that firestorm of 1809, there could have been a big one which landed over in Gulf Hammock. After all the years have passed, its crater would be a cypress pond with a particularly circular shape and an elevated ridge around it. If that pond is there, there is a big chunk of metal lying under it.

The sluff-off phenomenon of a descending meteorite is well known, as in the case of the giant one which hit the desert near Flagstaff, Arizona about 5000 years ago. Fragments of it were found ten miles away in El Diablo Canyon. If you ever get to the south rim of the Grand Canyon, the National Park Service has hauled one of those fragments (500 lbs.) up there for the tourists to gawk at. It was there the last time I was gawking at it.

So the evidence indicates that a sizeable meteorite crashed into the earth along the coastline, probably that night in 1809. The underside of my fragment shows just about the amount of ground-acids erosion that I would guess to be right to fit the number of years that I theorize it has lain there. Of course, the point of impact could have just as likely been out in the Gulf.

For the man riding his horse that night, the world did not come to an end. He would have died many years ago and the world goes on. But I wish I could have seen this place as it was then; no roads, no towns, just a great big wilderness of giant pines, cypress and live oaks. I try to imagine the sensation of walking through the fresh, primitive grandeur of such a place. The old cedar stands were there, the wildlife would have been very abundant. Just look at what has happened since. No wonder the Indians got mad.

CEDAR KEY DOCKS

Unless you are very young or a late arrival, you will remember the old docks. If you want to know what the docks of the 1800's were like, you should inspect the diorama at the Cedar Key State Museum. It is authentic.

Over the years, many people spent many happy hours on that old dock, including me. I recall a young couple doing some night fishing there some years ago. They had tucked their three happy little kids between and old quilt and blanket, so there they were, going to sleep under the great canopy of stars, hearing the water splash against the pilings below, knowing no fear because mamma and daddy were close by. What a wonderful experience that must have been for three little kids.

Then this character hooked a shark one morning on a star-drag rig. The shark scooted back and forth parallel to the dock's edge and our hero ran up and down behind the row of fishermen sitting on the edge, his rod and line going over their heads. At first he knocked a few hats off, then they would warn each other, "Duck! Here he comes again." This went on for about an hour. The shark gave him an unexpected jolt and his hat flew off and he dropped his cigar. On his next flying trip past that point, he scooped up his hat and put it on his head, on the next pass he scooped up the cigar and jammed it back between his teeth. On his face was an

expression of ferocious determination. Finally, he fought the shark around to some steps on the west side where someone (R. B. Davis, I think) gaffed the shark and hoisted him up on the deck. He was a big monster. When I left, the triumphant sportsman was standing there like Tarzan with one foot atop his shark, completely exhausted.

Automobile traffic became heavier on the dock roadway and its maintenance grew more expensive, so the decision was reluctantly made to fill it in. In its place is the two-lane paved road one can see there today. While a dragline was digging out for the fill, an old sailing ship's hull was found lying there. The dock's pilings had been punched through it. Anchor chain links and ballast stones were picked up by the dragline. The ballast was identified as having originated in the Mediterranean area. The old ship had been a sea-going freight hauler. Mr. Raddie Davis was about 90 at the time and he had never heard of it. We will never know the answer to that mystery.

The old dock had become impractical, it had to go and I saw the logic of that. No more steamboats would ever come down the Suwannee to load there. Its railroad connection vanished over forty years ago. Still, it was a relic, a symbol of the old days. I stood there and watched it being dismantled with a feeling of saying goodbye to something.

OLD RED

This column is usually about people, but if you will pardon this one deviation from the norm, I'd like to tell you about a dog. While I am not ordinarily a doggie type, there was something about this one, something out of the ordinary.

He was found at Levy County's seashore park west of Yankeetown by the people in two camper rigs from Michigan and New York State. They arrived and there stood the big dog, thin, almost starved. He didn't fawn, slurp or beg; he just stood there looking at them with his sad eyes, gently wagging his bony tail.

Like most campers from anywhere, these people were kind-hearted souls. They fed the dog and named him Red. An elderly couple from Ontario arrived and heard the story and promptly started helping feed and care for Red. Then a man from Tampa in a motorhome joined the project.

Over a period of time Red filled out his gaunt form and became sleek in appearance. The campers built a doghouse from scraps of driftwood, put a sign on the front which read THIS HERE DOGHOUSE BELONGS TO RED. That dog would sit in the door of his ramshackle structure and look around at his humans, and if you can believe happiness, pride and appreciation all shining at once, Red's eyes beamed with all that. We arrived on the scene at that moment and saw him standing proudly in the door of his house. He would fit the picture of the old classic redbone hunting hound except that his ears were too short.

During the next few days, the camper rigs began to pull out, one by one. Red would chase each one all the way to Yankeetown, barking frantically, trying to tell his humans not to leave, to turn around and come back. Finally, the last rig pulled out, driven by the elderly gentleman from Tampa. Red was going to be left alone. As usual, he ran alongside barking, but this time he followed all the way to Highway 19. The camper turned south and Red kept chasing. The driver noticed this but thought that Red would give up and return to the camp where some other campers would turn up and befriend him. As the big motorhome reached its cruising speed, Red's furiously pumping legs were no match for the wheels and he was rapidly left behind.

The driver concentrated his attention on the traffic and drove on a few miles, then happened to glance into a mirror and noticed a tiny speck in the distance, far to the rear. It was the determined Red, flattened out at his top speed, still doing his best, running his valiant heart out. The old man slowed and turned, muttering to himself that he couldn't take anymore of this. After all,

he was all alone in the world and so was Red. One loner can understand another loner. He helped the exhausted dog inside. Red had found a home.

That's not the end of the story. A few months later, the same motorhome nosed into the seaside park again and out hopped Red. The Michigan campers were back and so were we. Red remembered us, he ran from one to the other, greeting his friends in a frenzy of joy, wagging his tail in a furry blur. At the moment, that had to be the happiest dog in Levy County.

That night, all of us sat around a little campfire, talking drowsily, comparing experiences, enjoying the night. Red lay there sleeping. Now and then he would softly whine in some doggie dream of his. We talked about dogs having racial memories of the Old Cro-Magnons around their local campfires in the ice-shrouded mountains in prehistoric Europe. Maybe Red was reliving that, maybe that explained his evident pleasure in being around a fire on a chilly night with his humans. A tugboat passed out there in the night, pushing a barge. Red came alive, ran down to the water's edge, stood there, not barking, just gazing intently at the passing boat. Then we talked about how he could have been a tugboat dog that fell overboard and swam to this shore and that could have been how he got to this park the first time.

The next morning, the motorhome pulled out, but this time was different. Red had no fear of being left alone. He was inside looking back at us through the window, wagging his tail in affectionate farewell. And that was the last time I saw ole Red. Although he was just a nondescript dog of indeterminate ancestry, he liked all humans and he appreciated everything done for him by them. Now he has joined the canine establishment, the collar he wears is his badge of belonging.

I will long remember that spectacular sunset, the campfire that night by the sea, the dry rustle of the palm fronds in the night winds, the splash of a fish out there in the dark sea, the glitter of the ancient stars overhead, the pleasure of knowing these quiet, friendly people. But most of all, I will remember Red. I am proud to be a member of Red's Camper Club. I hope that we meet again someday.

This story started out to be about a dog and the dog seems to be the central figure of it. Not much was said about the people as such, but even so, the story is really about them. Red couldn't write or talk, but he somehow managed to tell you a lot about these people, what they are like.

THE 1850 DECADE

Levy County seems to have been established as a governmental entity in 1845, about one week after Florida became a state. The people did not all move in the next day and start housekeeping; they were already here as settlers who had moved in some years before. The first county seat was at Levyville, one of the several now-extinct towns of Levy County. Note that Levyville was already established when the county started. Considering the parallelism of the names, the town was probably named Levyville at the same time the county was named Levy. There is a legend that Bronson was considered as the original county seat location but the decision was made to locate at Levyville. Maybe someone else has documented or verified this version; I have not done so. I just heard about it. However, I do see some indications of a rivalry between these two frontier towns and this rivalry must have had some basis in reality. Maybe it was retail business competition, or it could have originated from competition for the original location of the county seat. Indications of the rivalry are evident from certain entries in early records (minutes) kept by the County Commissioners.

The members of that first County Commission probably had little or no experience in governmental procedures, and in light of that, they did surprisingly well. One thing can be assumed about them; they were versatile and adaptable.

Incidentally, it is doubtful that Levyville was ever known as Sodom. Sodom was a derisive name applied to a subdivision near the courthouse, this subdivision being owned by the county and promoted by the commission. For validation, I quote from the minutes of April 8, 1854, "It is ordered that the courthouse lots being offered for sale shall hereinafter be called by the name of Mount Pleasant and not by the name of Sodom." Legends have a tendency to get warped around by the passage of time. But, from the meeting of January, 1856, "It is ordered that the county cite be known as Levyville, anything to the contrary notwithstanding." When quoting, I will use their exact spelling. That second quote apparently weakens my conclusion based on the first quote. It is usually difficult to be sure of this sort of thing.

In the same vein, Bronson was one place and Chunky

Pond was another settlement and the two were separate. From the meeting of November, 1859, "ordered to clear the road from Bronson by way of Chunky Pond to intersect the old road at J. Brown's place." That scatters the legend that Bronson was named Chunky Pond. Chunky is a corruption of the original Indian name for that lake.

Back to Levyville, the Commission Chairman was called the judge of the Probate Court. The Commission itself was the Probate Court. Somewhere along the line the name changed, just when I am not sure.

They were constantly ordering "roads cut" from one point to another point and listing the names of owners of the real estate through which these roads passed. Now these roads were already in existence. When they "Cut" the road, they meant clear out the brush that had grown up in the road. If a new road was ordered, they labeled it as new. Then the Commission appointed three road commissioners for each road. I can only surmise the duties of these individuals. Maybe they were to keep the roads cleared.

One road they kept referring to is Green's Trail, later called Green's Road. It seems to have led from Clay Landing into the Judson area where it crossed another road which went from Fort Fanning to "Micanopie". Now, who was Green, where is he buried, and where was his road? For that matter, how did Clay Landing get its name? Clay Landing is a leading contender to being one of the oldest settlements in Levy County. According to William Bartram, the naturalist, there was an Indian village there in 1774. He visited it. I read that about twenty years ago and naturally went hot-footing it over there. On the river bottom, near the edge, I found a lot of Indian pottery fragments. Bartram also mentioned an Indian village at Manatee Springs.

But, back to this elusive Green. I think that about the same time Bellamy was cutting his road from St. Augustine to Tallahassee (1824-25), Green was over on this side of the state hacking out his road. A portion of Bellamy's road is preserved. You can see it just west of the High Springs exit on I-75. Green seems to have been heading for Newnansville (the now-extinct, original county seat of Alachua County) with his road. The most prominent aspect of historical research is an accumulation of unanswered questions.

THE 1850 DECADE, AGAIN

In an effort to reconstruct the pattern of who was here, where they lived and when, we present more notes from the old records. On a road from Levyville "The most nearest and best way to Shell Pond on the county line", the road commissioners were listed as J. F. McDonalds, Isaac Highsmith, David F. Holder and Miles Shepherd. I am assuming that the road commissioners lived on the road they looked after but this might not have always been true (this is in 1855). Shortly before this, they have Isaac Highsmith operating a store on the road from Levyville to Clay Landing. Probably most of the commissioners for a specific road lived along that road.

The same year, Thomas L. Winn, J. A. Everette resigned from the Levyville road to Everett's Ferry and Gilbert Reeves, H. H. Johnson and R. J. Godwin ("recommended as a suitable person"), were appointed. The Johnson would have been Haiston Johnson, later to have the southwest Levy County voting precinct named after him. That precinct was first named the Black Neck District from an old Indian chief who must have had a very peculiar neck. The name somehow evolved into Black Dirt District and then the Haiston Johnson District. It was the area from Inglis to Lebannon to Gulf Hammock. This could be the Johnson of Johnson's Folly.

In 1856, Calvin Nobles is listed as being from Bronson. Granville W. Worthington and James C. Daniels were along the road from Levyville to Cedar Keys; H. J. Clyatt, William W. Stevens and Silvester Bryant on the road from Levyville to Clay Landing. Isaac P. Hardee brought in the election returns from Clay Landing. On the road from Levyville to Fort Fanning were A. J. Collins, T. C. Love and Daniel B. Hogans.

During this time period, the prominence of Clay Landing should be noted. An Indian village was there from the 1700's, someone probably started a trading post, followed by various stores; steamboats loaded and unloaded there. At the same time, Levyville was situated like the hub of a wheel with roads radiating out in the form of spokes.

In 1857, John F. Oglisby is mentioned as being from Cedar Key. Back to "W. R. Medlin's having bid off Lot No. 8 in a state of intoxication" and the lot being repossessed for resale, I neglected to mention the idea of reading between the lines. Very likely, after three years, someone else wanted Medlin's lot. Benjamin Brownlow (also appears as Brownlove) lived at Clay Landing and Elijah Tucker, Peter H. Davis, and William F. Smith were appointed to the road to what looks like "Old Fort Wacafafa" (Waccasassa, formerly spelled Wacassassa). They wrote a double S to resemble an F. although this was not done consistently. Apparently the practice was on the way out at this time.

In October, 1857, the name George Dyals appears.

In February, 1858, S. A. Edwards lived at Atseena Otie (their spelling). The same year, appointed to the road from Clay Landing by A. Martin's to intersect the Cedar Key road were Joseph Hardee, I. P. Hardee, and Peter Lasteringer. The Dr. James C. Howard who was granted permission to cut some of the timber from the public square in Levyville is buried somewhere in the woods near Otter Creek. This same year, O. H. P. Kirkland and Benjamin B. Lane appear as commissioners in road district No. 3 (from Cedar Key inland). In 1859, Moses Keen and Elisha Walker lived in or near Bronson, Benjamin B. Brooks somewhere between Bronson and what was later to be Raleigh.

The Old Military Road is mentioned in September, 1859, and was still being used as a thoroughfare. It came into Fort Jennings from the north. Fort Jennings was built partly out over the Waccasassa on posts so that the occupants could lower a rope and bucket for water while under siege. Whenever the Indians got on the warpath, the settler families would retreat into the fort until the hostility subsided.

On one occasion, probably in the 1820's, the Indians became unusually agitated and the settlers huddled inside the fort. This usually resulted in a stalemate, but this time, the Indians suddenly withdrew, a different maneuver from their usual pattern. Then a scout arrived with the alarming news that the Indians had gone to arrange for massive reinforcements. The soldiers and settler families left the fort hastily and made a safe escape from the area. Meanwhile, a government courier, not knowing of the situation, came riding down the Old Military Road with the Army payroll (gold coins in his saddle bags) for Fort Jennings and other posts. Finding the Fort deserted, he started to retreat by the same road. He detected that Indians were in the vicinity, knew he had to make a run for it, so he buried the heavy saddlebags by the road, hastily sketched a location map which he stuffed inside a bedroll, and ran for his life. He didn't make it.

A military unit coming to the rescue of Fort Jennings found the riderless horse some miles to the north. The courier was never found. About eighty years later, someone came across this in the national archives, came down here and dug great holes along the old road.

John Yearty of Gulf Hammock heard this from his father, the late Will Yearty. Both of them were slightly skeptical about the gold part - everything is too pat and meshes together too conveniently. Some of it certainly happened. The Fort Jennings episode is true, and the elder Mr. Yearty had seen the big holes himself. Still it could all be true. Stranger things have happened.

I have not pinpointed the location. People who smash the foundations of old ruins and dig big holes turn me off.

THE 1860 DECADE

Although these years encompassed the Civil War and the beginning of reconstruction, those events are dealt with in presentations other than this one. The old records maintain a road (January, 1860) as going from "Fort Ginnings (Jennings) to Stafford's." For years afterwards, numerous references are made to Stafford's (place) and Stafford's Folly. Stafford must have really messed up and became quite well known for having done so. I am still on the trail trying to locate his place. There is some possibility that this is not related, but the big island in the lower Waccasassa River is still named Stafford's Island, and a man by that name once lived a sort of hermit-like existence on the island. He might have been a descendant of the old Stafford of Stafford's Folly. If you are a new-comer to the area and would like to see a little bit of old Florida in all its pristine freshness, start from Doug's Waccasassa Marina and go down that river. Just go slowly and absorb the sheer beauty and the natural scenery. The water appears to be dark but that is an optical illusion. The water is clean, the bottom is dark. A word of caution, if you are not an experienced boat operator, don't go down there to learn how, get some old pro to do the piloting.

Also during January, 1860, a voting precinct was established at the house of Benjamin Brooks at Roseville or Rossville (the old writing is very faded). Was this the forerunner of Rosewood (probable) or a separate place? In March, 1860, the road commissioners Thomas Starling, Moses Keen, and Elisha Walker (Bronson residents) were ordered (by the County Commission) to "appear and face charges of neglect of duty"; complainant, Peter H. Davis. At the April meeting, the charges were dropped. The old timers could get very indignant and place charges against each other, almost as a casual sort of custom.

In April, 1860, "ordered that we proceed to build a courthouse at the present county site in Leviville and that the same be let out and published in the Cedar Key Telegraph and the Florida Dispatcher."

Fifteen years after Levy County was organized, they still had not built a courthouse. This entry also provides information to the effect that those two newspapers were being published at that time. The order to build was voided at a called meeting later during the same month; "until the voice of the people of the county could be heard."

By this time, Yulee's railroad was in full operation, from Fernandina Beach to Cedar Key. Years before, the railroad had been planned to pass through Levyville. A length of right of way was cleared and fenced. Then the route was changed to go through Bronson. The abandoned right of way through Levyville was used for years afterward as a settlement road and was known as the Old Wire Road.

In July, 1860, the commissioners were somewhat incensed: "The said George C. Caulsen (Colson) did

kill and use a certain cow belonging to the county, George H. Hires (Hiers) did the same with a certain steer, and Isaac Highsmith in like manner a certain steer." One of the early Colsons lived near Bronson - a small lake there is still known as Colson's Hole. There is no way to know if he is the Colson who shot the certain cow.

From the October, 1860, entries, it can be seen that Edmun Kelsey lived at Atsena Otie and H. M. Holland at Clay Landing. In December, 1860, Alfred Mooning is mentioned as being from Atsena Otie. Then they recorded a heated discussion of the passage charges on the ferry from Cedar Key to Way Key and to No. 4.

I am bugged by these cryptic references to No. 4. Today there is a No. 4 bridge and a No. 4 Channel. Back then, there was a No. 4 voting precinct, a No. 4 stage coach depot, a No. 4 school, and a No. 4 community, apparently all referring to the same location. One of the ferry landings was there. It sounds like there was a small town named No. 4.

In 1860, Cedar Key (the name of a town, not an island) was still located on Atsena Otie Island. The term Key (pronounced as in door key), is an adaptation of the Spanish word for island, Cay. The town of Cedar Key was later moved to its present location on Way Key. The whole island group along that part of our West Coast is called Cedar Keys. The correct name of the town is not Cedar Keys, but Cedar Key.

Now how did Way Key get its name? It was once a port of entry with a customs house where incoming cargo might be weighed, so it might have started out as Weigh Key. Or it could have been "on the way" to Atsena Otie or an earlier settler could have been named Way. A lot of misinformation gets started by some writer seizing upon one of the above speculations and publishing the same as validated fact. As for this writer, he doesn't know. For that matter, the word "Way" may have been a residue of some Spanish word with which I am not familiar. An alternate name was Depot Key.

That ferry operated for many years. The late Will Yearty's father was one of its operators. If I were a rabid hunter of antique bottles, I would try to locate the old No. 4 ferry landing. I can picture some inebriated type sitting on the dock waiting for the ferry and throwing his emptied bottle out to see it splash. Remember, there are moccasins in marshes.

In October, 1860, they "ordered the old road from Levyville to Bronson reopened, by way of Mr. Hatcher's and crossing the Waccasassa at Upper Ford." It "ran by the land of Joseph Wilkinson." The Upper Ford was where the Iron Bridge was to be located many years later. The Lower Ford was just south of Highway 27-A.

In spite of the war, the frontier settlements were expanding, at least, for awhile. It was a time of turbulence.

CONTEMPORARY FOLKWAYS: THE VOICES

Papa was a good man. He worked and earned his way in this ole world and he never wanted anything anybody else had earned. I members the time, jest before Christmas, me and Sam was little boys then, we went into Mr. Dillon's big store that was on Main Street in old Bronson. I had on this coat my uncle had given me. It was the coat of a grown man's suit and came down to my knees. I was prouda my coat. So while me and Sam was standin' around I slipped five big red apples into the pockets of my coat and we went home.

I showed the apples to Papa. I thought I had done something big like. I musta been too dumb to know I had done wrong. Papa took care of that in a hurry. First, he explained that Jesus didn't like for little boys to steal stuff outta stores or anywhere else. Then he got a switch in each hand and whupped up on me and Sam all the way back to Mr. Dillion's store. So here we goes arunnin' as fast as we could with Papa right on our heels with both switches going and my big coat loaded with apples and it afloppin'.

The worst part of it was, we had to pass right by the house of two white boys that me and Sam played with all the time. Naturally they had to be standin' in the front yard with their eyeballs stuck out and their mouths open. Me and Sam stopped cryin' until we got past there, then we opened up again.

We got to Mr. Dillon's store and I had to give him back the apples I stole and explain what we had done and that we wuz sorry. Mr. Dillion tried to give us some of the apples but Papa wouldn't let us accept them. Pore ole Sam, he got whupped up on and all he had done was stand around and watch me do the dirty work.

Before God, for the rest of my life I never stole anything else and I bet Sam never did either. Come Christmas mornin', some big red apples was under the tree for me and Sam. I never did know jest where they come from, but looking back now, I know that Mr. Dillon felt sorry for me and Sam and I think he musta sneaked the apples over to Mama to give to us.

Yes, Papa was a good man. He believed in the right and he done his best to live that way. If he was alive today I know he'd be disgusted to see all the hands stuck out sayin' gimmie, gimmie. Papa was a real man. He stood on his own two feet and could look anything in the eye. May the good Lord bless his memory.

Some Citizens Band Conversations One Might Hear

"Eyeah, how about at Northbound? Eyeah, old Blue Eyes is alookin' fer at Northbound."

"Ye gotta Northbound, come awn."

"Eyeah, gud buddy, eyeah. We jest crossed at Suwannee River and comeing outta the butcher shop. What's back over the shoulder?"

"Wal, gud buddy, yew have arrived at Smokeyville Headquarters. When yew git to at there Chiefland

town, git offa the hammer and let the anchor drag. Next, gud buddy, yew come to at Bronson town and thangs get worse. There's old State Bear around 'air whut gives out green stamps with both hands. Out the other side, gud buddy, there's a County Mounty waitin', the size of King Kong. And there's Local Smokies all over the place. So the best ah kin tell yew, gud buddy, is to smile all the way until you git clear of that Williston town. You kin get yore pitcher took anytime. Go 'head."

"Eyeah, gud buddy, eyeah! I shoulda stayed on that ole superslab, eyeah. What's the handle there?"

"Yew got the Count of Montecristo."

"Eyeah, gud buddy, eyeah, and thanks for the info. Old Blue Eyes is Clear."

If you need a translation, A State Bear is a highway patrol, a County Mounty is a deputy, a Local Smokie is a policeman, a Hammer is a truck throttle, "Getting his picture taken" means being caught by radar units, the superslab is an interstate highway, the butchershop is the truck scales, and traffic tickets are called green stamps.

If You Could Hear One Side Only

"Come back here, Chuck, I gotcha!-----" "Yeah, Chuck, I been tryin' to gitcha for the last half hour. Chuck there's a feller out here at the huntin' camp alookin' for you."-----"Yeah, there is. A girl."-----"Well, he's a kind of older feller, got a shotgun."-----"Ten nine, Chuck? Chuck, you fading out. Come back, Chuck. Chuck?"-----

Little Girl To Older Brother

"Headlight base to Highlight Mobile."

"Yeah. Whatcher want?"

"Wat chawl doin' out there?"

"We cookin' the barbecue and summa us are cleanin' the squirrels. Now git offa the base and stop botherin' me."

"Grandma said brang her somma that barbecue when yawl come in."

"You tell Grandma we busy and ain't got no time to worry bout what she wants. Besides, I'll probly be late agitten' in."

"Grandma said she's on beat the hell outta you if you don't brang her summa that barbecue."

"All right, all right! I'll brang her summa the barbecue if that's the way she feels about it. Teller not to git her apern inna uproar!"

"OK, Headlight base'll be clear."

And the voices of the people can be heard across this land, some of them trivial and meaningless, others with a philosophy and a sense of fairness and justice. You must listen between the lines and think about what you hear, the part that is implied but unsaid, and then you will see the deep and abiding faith which is the real foundation of real Americans.

SOME MORE WONDERFUL KIDS

NIGHT STORM

Some More Wonderful Kids

One Saturday in October about twelve years ago, a biology class from Bronson High School landed on the island of Atsena Otie, along with three parents and one teacher (me). It was a fine day of sunshine. The kids were there to observe the tidal zone marine life firsthand, collect a few specimens, and to generally observe that philosophically enriching pastime known as beachcombing.

The children knew what to do. They formed small groups and moved out to do their thing. In each group, at least one boy would be well experienced in this kind of environment. He was the group strawboss. All groups would communicate by means of small CB radios they carried. Over in Cedar Key, a base station was monitoring our channel in case we got into trouble. Now that everything was organized and in operation, I had the opportunity to do some personal exploration in the area.

It was after I returned home that night that something dawned upon me, a curious thing it was at first. Throughout the day, I had never been alone--I was escorted closely by four of the kids, always four and now always the same individuals. They took turns, worked in shifts, and I remembered how intently they had watched me as I poked around, always close to me.

From my military experiences in WWII I emerged a cripple, my walking is limited and uncertain. Those kids were right there to catch me if I fell, or to rescue me if I became stuck. It was their own idea, they planned this and executed their plans rather thoroughly.

Most of them were just sixteen years old and they showed a thoughtfulness and compassionate concern beyond the average and mature adults. It really hit me. I learned a bigger lesson that day than my class did. Never again did I worry the least bit about that beautiful group of young human beings growing up to become first class, responsible citizens. They had already reached that plateau, at age sixteen.

Night Storm

It's late at night and the little cabin cruiser is anchored in a tidal estuary of the marsh area around the East Fark, the mouth of the Suwannee River. I sit on the rear dock under the stars and hear the quiet sounds of the wild marsh animals moving stealthily out there in the darkness. Out to sea, a great thunderhead illuminates it's bulging heights with random flickers of yellow lightning--an occasional blue-white flare among the yellow and orange.

This is the ultimate relaxation, to sit here in this solitary expanse of unspoiled nature, to smell the fresh majesty of that night storm. It's coming closer and I begin to hear the delayed rumble of thunder. Now the massive prominences are blotting out all the stars on that whole side of the night sky, the lightning jumps and twists around inside, the first rain--smell winds begin to arrive and the little waves against the boat hull are splashing their drum sounds faster now. The low, fast reefer clouds are shutting out the remaining stars.

I go inside and by the time I am bedded down in a forward bunk the rain is slamming a staccato roar onto the deck-roof just over my head and through the open porthole I hear the glass-tinkle, sleety sound of the rain hitting the water surface out there. Inside the boat I am snug and dry and the last thing I think about as I go to sleep is how fortunate I am to be so comfortable inside the sheltering cocoon instead of standing out there in the vast darkness of the marsh being lashed by cold rain.

That was one of the good times leaving me with the memory of becoming fully aware of the awesome beauty and magnificence of God's creation. When you know this, you reach a deep and peaceful understanding of where you are, what you are, and your destiny; an understanding that is felt and can never be said in words. Sometime ago I promised to take you to that place of the night storm and now I have done so.

PLACE NAMES

This is a list of place names and the earliest date of record for each that I find. The list is not complete, and it is assumed that each place existed for an indeterminate number of years prior to the point in time at which I find the oldest date of mention. Some of these still exist by the same name, others have disappeared, and I do not know the location of all of them. What this does establish is that some of these places go back further than is usually known. Here is the list.

Mary V. Andrews		Tyre's Alley	1877
Plantation	1850	Barco's Ferry	1877
Wekiva Hammock	1850	Hartman Settlement	1877
City Landing	1850	Old Station Pond	1877
Margaret Blanton's		Stafford's Pond	1877
house	1850	Wolfe Springs	1877
Newnansville	1850	Hafele's Ditch	1877
Highsmith's Store	1851	Willis School House	1877
Live Oak Key	1854	Ebenezer Church	1878
Anderson Gillette's		Willis Mill	1878
house	1854	Cow Gully	1879
Everett's Ferry	1854	Rattlesnake Bay	1879
Shell Pond	1855	Watermelon Pond	1879
Atsena Otie	1856	Albion	1879
Otter Creek Ford	1856	Sand Pond	1879
Camp Fannin (instead		Church Pond	1879
of Fort)	1856	Morgan Bridge	1879
John Webster's Gin		Quincey's Blacksmith	
House	1857	Shop	1879
Fort Waccasassa	1857	La Grange	1880
Gainesville	1857	McGee's Branch	1880
Fort White	1857	Chamber's Crossing	1880
Chunky Pond	1857	Joel Hodges Ferry	1880
Alligator	1858	Joppa	1881
Martin's Island	1858	Williston	1881
Little Raulerson		Four Mile Pond	
Field	1859	School	1882
Old Military		Rocky Hammock	
Road	1859	Church	1882
The Depot at		Cotton Plant	1882
Bronson	1859	Midway Academy	1883
Roseville		Trenton	1883
(Rosewood?)	1860	Munden Bridge	1884
Black neck	1860	Lonesome Bridge	1884
No. 4 Ferry	1860	Double Bridge	1884
Hollow Rock	1861	Blitch's Ferry	1885
Sawgrass Church	1861	Horton's Store	1885
Stafford's Folly	1870	Cow House	1885
P.A. Prestor's		Judson	1886
place	1871	Ellzey	1887
Blind Horse		Hodges Ferry	1887
Ferry	1871	Pine Grove	
Beasley Landing	1871	Church	1888
Mule Creek	1871	Meredith's Mill Site	1890
Mud Slue	1871	Lowe's Landing	1891
Sand Slue	1871	Waterston Hammock	1891
Cow Creek	1871	Sumner	1892
Station 12		Orange Hill Church	1892
(also Palmetto)	1871	Gomm's Store	1893
Fowler's Bluff	1874	Phoenix Post Office	1893
White's Folly	1875	Boothby's Mill	1893
		Gile's Pond	1893
		Bird Creek Landing	1894
		Mondin Lake	1896
		John Gore's Store	1896
		Jerico Post Office	1897
		Reddy's Landing	1897
		Carter's Mill	1897
		Boneda (Bonita?)	1898
		Johnson's Folly	1898
		White's Folly	1901
		Center Point	1902
		Cameron Bridge	1902

Inglis	1904
Wylly	1904
Lennon	1905
Owen Prairie School	1908
Double Sink	1908
Hartman School	
House	1908
Smith's Prairie	1910
Meredith	1911
Sheep Prairie	1912
Burns Landing	1913
The Iron Bridge	1913
Lebanon	1913
"Old Chiefland"	1914
Keadle Bridge	1915
Wilcox	1915
College Hill	1917
Steen	1920
Weeks Landing	1923

The source of these names and dates tends to list the place in relation to roads. Quite a number of old place names existed besides these. Here are some clues related to the above list.

The Mary V. Andrews plantation was around Chiefland. Margaret Blanton's house was at Clay Landing. Maybe I am assuming that you are better acquainted with the area than you actually might be. Clay Landing is on the Suwannee between Manatee Springs and Fannin. Newnansville (extinct) was in Alachua County. Live Oak Key was once inhabited, a road went through the marsh to it. Anyone at Cedar Key can point it out to you. Everett's Ferry was on the Withlacoochee. Atsena Otie is the big island in front of

the county dock at Cedar Key. Wester's Gin House was not a retail outlet selling intoxicating liquors, it was a cotton gin. Before the boll weevil arrived, cotton was a big operation around here. Fort White is not in Levy, Gilchrist or Dixie counties. Chunky Pond (near Bronson) is a corruption of Lake Chuckahaha, the Indian name, said to mean "dance." I view these translations of Indian names with a grain of salt. I don't have the slightest idea of where Alligator was, except that John Waterston brought the precinct returns in from there. I am guessing that it was vaguely west of Chiefland.

The Old Military Road came in to Fort Jennings from the general direction of Suwannee. Rosewood was at the intersection of Hwy 24 and Hwy 345., scattered around that general area. Beasley Landing was on the Waccasassa, and Cow Creek is a tributary of that stream. I am attempting to connect Fowler's Bluff with the Fowler Lumber Company but I am mildly surprised to find the place by that name that far back (must research this further.) Tyre's alley is an old street in Bronson. This Tyre person remains something of a mystery. The Hartman Settlement was outside Bronson, just north of Hwy 32-S, and another group of Hartmans lived at Gulf Hammock, all the same family.

Wolf Springs is a reference to Wolfe Spring Hill, on 27-A from Bronson to Williston, named after an early settler of that area, John Wolfe. Hafele's Ditch is still there, a hundred years later, on the Chunky Pond grade. It was much used as a point of reference. Ebenezer Church is between Bronson and Trenton. The Willis School House is mentioned in 1870 in relation to a road, so Williston (might have started as Willis Town) has existed as a residential aggregate for more than one hundred years. The reverse of that happens; New Town (was near Ebenezer) started as Newton, the name of the saw mill owners.

HOW THEY TALKED

There is no such thing as a southern accent or a northern accent. A person whose native language was one other than English and who learned English as a second language speaks with an accent. The rest of us speak dialects, all of us do. Of course there is the egotistical and provincial type of person who thinks his dialect is THE mainstream American English and everyone else (different from him) speaks a dialect, more or less perverted, depending on the individual's particular level of conceit. There is also no such thing as one dialect that is American mainstream English.

But enough of that for the nonce. If you are interested in pursuing the subject further, be advised to consult one of the professional teachers of English at any one of our area high schools. Please remember that they are very busy people.

The English speaking people who migrated into this area as settlers brought with them the dialects from their points of origin in England, some of those dialects being blurred by a few previous generations of ancestors living in the colonies or the United States.

There are two major dialects in the South, low southern (lowland) and high southern (highland) and each is made up of several sub-dialects. Low-southern is characterized by the odd (to me) pronunciation of the letter R. One of them eats "suppuh" and drives a "cah." There was very little low southern spoken around here in the old days and not much now.

When I first came here I heard the unmistakable twang of old Northumberland English in the Judson area. One of them would "Cloimb a poine tray to look around and couldn't say a thang in soight." That's a fossil dialect but it is just as "corect" as anyone's English, probably more so than some.

The Suwannee pioneers had a tendency to insert an extra R into some words. One of them wrote the minutes of a commissioners' meeting and didn't know the correct spelling of some words, but he could spell anything phonetically. So he spelled the words as he heard them. Gainesville came out "Garnsville."

They also (the Anglo-Saxon types) had a tendency to move a word's accent syllable to the first syllable in the word. Then they would drop a letter off the end and hang on an S. A. lot of fine old names were bent out of shape by the process. Von Busselle could wind up being Buzzels.

The Germans, Italians, Africans, Frenchmen and other non-English immigrants landed in this country and learned to speak English with the dialect they heard spoken around them. Usually, the next generation of these people had dropped almost all traces of accent from the original language.

In Mississippi, I knew Jewish and Chinese people who had lived there for several generations. They spoke the same slow drawling dialect used by everyone else around there. Visiting tourists from up north couldn't

believe this, they were sure that it was all a put-on. They also viewed with skepticism some of the Negro people who spoke high southern. We used to have some confused tourists around there.

One person's hearing becomes "tuned" or, to put it another way, neural patterns are established in the auditory receptive brain centers, so that one dialect may sound "right" to that person while some other dialect may drive him up a wall. Keeping that in mind, my northern friends tell me that, to their ears, some southern men seem to be talking with a mouth full of mush while some southern women sound as if they are meowing like cats. Remember the ear "tune" thing. To Southerners, northern men seem to be barking and the women quacking, particularly the persons who speak the big city dialects. Rural northern dialects sound less alien to southern ears.

The point here is mutual tolerance. One dialect is just as "good" or "correct" as another. A person goes to live in another dialect area and, quite unconsciously, he will pick up speech mannerisms from the new dialect. A southern man, returning from the North, will have picked up a little of the hard consonants and chopped vowels from up there. His old southern friends are mildly disgusted. They firmly believe that the prodigal is deliberately trying to "talk like a Yankee," and the poor soul is honestly not aware of how he sounds. The reverse also happens. A northern person moves to the south to live, and after a few years, goes back to his old neighborhood for a visit. The first time he opens his mouth, his old friends start howling with laughter, to his bewilderment. This phenomenon is more pronounced in younger persons than in senior citizens.

It would take a book to cover this subject, a big book, but a little insight might promote more understanding. Then we might avoid something like the American tourists in Mexico who, when trying to communicate with a native with a very limited command of English, start shouting as if the Spanish person is hard of hearing. No wonder some Mexicans think los Gringos are simpatico. A Mexican tourist in the United States would never do that. he would wave his hands around.

The whole scene is further confused by individual speech idiosyncrasies, sloppy enunciation, speech defects, affectations, mental laziness, and family speech traditions. Education, or the lack of it, affects an individual's dialect.

These dialects are constantly changing and that occurs somewhat rapidly. If your great-great-grandfather was a pioneer in this area, and he could move through time to talk to you, you would have a slight difficulty in understanding him. If you could hear an Englishman from six-hundred years ago, you would think he spoke some foreign language that sounded vaguely like German.

THE SHIFT

At first, the trading posts were there. To haul heavy freight overland in wagons along the sandy trails was a grueling experience for both the men and their teams. Less resistance to motion occurred when the cargo was afloat, so the early trading posts were along waterways. A possible factor was the decreased vulnerability to Indian hostility when the freight was floated.

The old name for the frontier retail establishment was "stand." If you might be interested in the derivation, try checking out the old word "Strand" (as a noun, not a verb). While in elementary school I read in my little history book about Doak's Stand on the Natchez Trace. The Natchez Trace comes into Old West Florida (now part of Mississippi) and was one of the Super Trails or Interstate Trails during the last half of the 1700's. I had a mental picture of a stubborn old Dutchman named Doak who grew tired of running from whomever was chasing him and dug in at this spot, ready to fight off all comers; the intrepid Doak took his stand. In recent years we meandered along the Natchez Trace Parkway and found a Park Service display explaining the whole thing. Doak operated a store and inn. That was his stand.

By some judicious tacking maneuvers, sailing vessels could navigate the Suwannee for some distance upstream. The river packet steamers were active for some years prior to the Civil War in several of this area's rivers. The movement of trade and commerce was east-west along those rivers and to a lesser extent along the wagon trails. Travel going north-south through here was comparatively rare. The settlements that we might call towns were "natural" towns, meaning they came into existence to fit the pattern of local trade and productive activity.

Yulee's railroad began operating just before the Civil War with its western terminal at Cedar Key. The railroad further reinforced the east-west route of commerce and it blended with the river traffic, which boomed for the fifty years following the Civil War. Archer, Bronson, and Otter Creek grew rapidly (it is necessary to keep in mind the scale upon which this was happening), and new towns appeared along the railroad. All the towns along the tracks did not necessarily exist at any one time, but here is the list, moving west: Archer, Albion, Meredith, Bronson, Ottilla, Lennon, Otter Creek, Wylly, Rosewood, Sumner, Lukens, Cedar Key, in that order.

In the late 1800's, south Florida activities got underway, north-south railroads began to appear; by the turn of the century the embryonic automobile was soon to appear, then trucks, then highways, so that the big flow of commerce gradually underwent a ninety degree shift leaving only a trickle moving along the traditional east-west routes. Those routes ceased to operate when they became less than profitable. The north-south railroads and highways lessened dependence on water borne freight.

When the directional shift became established, Yulee's old railroad was discontinued after about seventy years of operation. All the towns along the line disappeared except Archer, Bronson, Otter Creek, and

Cedar Key and they dwindled in size from their former levels. There were other factors at work during the same period. The Yulee railroad was sustained not only by hauling freight across Florida but also by locally productive commerce. This commerce was cannibalistic in nature; it fed upon itself without replenishment until the basic substance was gone, then sudden death. When the cedar harvest was ended the whole industry of processing the cedar was also ended. Then the cypress went and after that the pines--after that, nothing.

There was a time when Levy County could have very well been named Stumpville. But this phenomenon was not confined to Levy and nearby counties, it happened all over the South; it happened until the last of the great forests were gone.

Some of the assumptions by writers are amusing. I have read repeatedly that when the old pencil mills and saw mills at Cedar Key shut down, when the railroad stopped running, and Cedar Key no longer functioned as a port, well, Cedar Key turned to the seafood business and kept going. This implies that the seafood thing was small potatoes up until all these calamities happened. In 1899, when the other commercial operations were still going full blast, Cedar Key was running the biggest seafood business on the whole Gulf of Mexico and that includes Pensacola, Mobile and New Orleans. That's from an 1899 edition of the Levy Times-Democrat, published in Bronson. So an explanatory theory may be neat, fit like a glove, and have one little flaw, it never happened that way.

The ninety degree shift happened gradually and came about due to a multiplicity of interwoven factors, all of which I do not pretend to understand. I do know that it happened.

All the towns along 27 and 98-19 are affected by today's tourist activity to some extent. Trenton and Newberry are two examples of "natural" towns or agricultural trading centers. Their commercial activities are not much affected by tourism, the surrounding areas are agriculturally productive, the towns supply the retail and services requirements of that production; in short, they are self-contained towns whose commercial health is not so vulnerable to the vagaries of national commerce.

You might try to imagine the "natural" Gainesville if the University of Florida had stayed in Lake City. Without the government payrolls and other growth impetus attendant to the University, Gainesville would be about the size of Lake City.

Anyway, that ninety degree shift in the flow of travel was the biggest commercial event in this area during the last 150 years.

GULF HAMMOCK HUNTING CAMP

I called it the Levy County Hunting Syndrome and twenty years ago it was something to see. All the planning, the preparation, the anticipation for opening day of hunting season would build up a crescendo of feverish excitement as the great day approached.

One Chiefland bunch would go in August to "practice" camping out so they could have all that mastered and in control well ahead of time. The guns were cleaned and oiled several times, dogs were eyed speculatively. A few dogs become neurotic from being stared at so much. In September, Lyn Williams would make a Jeep trip out to his camp near the marsh to see if it was still there. I remember his telling about the dense accumulation of large spider webs strung across the ten mile trail on the way out there.

About two weeks before opening day, Frank Moring and some other sportsmen would be wearing camouflage coats and hunting caps day and night. On the day before, the exodus started; the hunters would "go in", when they came home, that was to "come out". On that day before opening, one Bronson bunch was celebrating the impending event by drinking beer toasts. This went on for awhile, then they were ready to go in. They started, but couldn't find their hunting camp so they became separated and each wandered around in the woods all night.

The towns of Levy County were left to the women, children, and elderly men. In Bronson, Mr. John Partin used to complain that only he and two other men older than he were left to bring in the stovewood for all the women in town and he wondered if the three of them were able to do all this.

Once in the woods, the skilled locals were apprehensive about getting shot by the influx of amateurs from Tampa and St. Petersburg. I remember seeing this character ride into the Waccasassa Marina, then known as William's Landing. He was a bulky individual with an impressive beard and rode a Honda Trail 90. He wore a leather vest, boots, and in the fork-mounted scabbard was a high powered rifle adequate for killing a buffalo. Strapped to his waist was a Dodge City pistol and a sugar cane machete. Riding that motorcycle (somewhat wobbly) and with all that hardware, he was the epitome of masculine ruggedness, the tough adventurer ready to battle the savage wilderness. One day's hard work would have probably put him into the hospital. Small wonder that the locals were apprehensive.

The hunters were there to go back in time, just for

awhile, to respond to the tradition of their ancestors who were wilderness scouts, explorers, and pioneers, the people of yesterday who settled the land and lived off that land because that was how they could survive. Each hunter of today is in the primitive woods and swamps with his gun, on his own, away from the tiresome stupidities of civilization. For just that short span of time, the man is free. I can understand and respect that.

Now it is the quiet time. Our campfire has flamed high, we have eaten mightily of the feast, we sang the old folk songs with gusto, the bright laughter of the children danced all around with the ecstasy of it all. My brother-in-law-the-mighty-hunter has finished telling how he shot a deer, my Lake County cousin politely muffles a large burp.

The fire burns low and steadily, its varicolored light flickers all across the underside vault of our overhead canopy of leaves and there is no more light in the vast darkness of this enchanted place. The nostalgic fragrance of the good oakwood smoke is a tone poem within itself. Across the road at the edge of the eastern swamp, an incredibly tall palm stands in black silhouette with the moonrise glowing behind it.

The night air grows chill, the sleepy swamp insects are chirping very softly. In the quietness I can hear the creak of the shifting embers of our fire. I sit here with the people I love and there is an aura of peace and tranquility all around. The conversations lapse into periods of silence as each of us turns his thoughts inward and back in time to his own personal reverie. As for me, I remember my brother David when we were small boys sitting by a fireplace on a cold winter night listening big-eyed to my father telling us the family legends, the old stories of high adventure. Now the moon rides high and the others leave the campfire to stumble sleepily to bed, leaving me to brood upon the mystery of it all.

I sat there deep into the night to savor the long thoughts, to feel the sadness and poignancy of the very short life that we humans live, to realize that the intended destiny of each of us is to find himself and know the full exuberance of life. Our fire had diminished to the smoldering glow of its death throes, a wispy tendril of cloud came across the face of the moon.

And now, my friend, I have kept my promise once more. I took you again to Never-Never Land.

TURPENTINE

The industry started sometime back in the 1800's, flourished for about sixty years and was about dead by the late 1930's. I was around the business very little, so I have been fortunate in having the advisory assistance of two retired professionals, Mr. G. M. Owens and Mr. George Hemingway, both of Bronson. I am indebted to them for their kindness which enables me to use the terminology of the turpentine industry just like I know what I am talking about.

In the beginning, the box system was used. A cavity was hacked out in the base of the tree, gum collected there to be scooped out with a dip iron. Later, tin cups, shaped like the dip iron, collected the gum. The tin cups (actually galvanized sheet metal) also collected rain water which rusted the metal and produced a discoloration of the gum (pine sap). The box system was gradually replaced by the Herty system around 1906. The Herty system used ceramic pots, still called boxes.

The bark was blazed off in a vertical strip and V-shaped indentations called hack marks formed a pattern known as a face. The tree was allowed to heal for a month or so. Little tin gutters were inserted to guide the sap flow. A crop was 10,500 boxes and was worked by one man who did the chipping. Another man, sometimes two, did the dipping. The ceramic pots were emptied with a flatiron tool. The dip squad moved around with a team, wagon and barrels. The gum was first collected in a keg, or if by kids, a 5 quart pail. The hand-carried container was called a bucket, regardless of size or material. During the winter the flow slowed and the small accruelement of winter was called scrape.

At the distillery, hereinafter referred to as the still, the barrels of gum were placed on a platform. The number of barrels needed for a charge were dumped into the boiling vat and vaporized by the heat from a cordwood fire in the furnace below. Condensation of the vapor, spirits of turpentine, collected in a barrel partly filled with water. As the spirits accumulated the water was drained through a bottom port. The non-vaporizing residue in the primary boiler would be rosin. An intermediate stage utilized a cotton filter and the solified impurities thus collected was dross, a flammable substance.

In the cooper shop, the cooper made barrels for shipping out the rosin or resin. Spirits of turpentine was

shipped in fifty gallon factory-made barrels which were glued together.

In 1927, about fifteen stills were operating in Levy County, E. T. Usher, Sr. and Claude Rogers were at Chiefland, the West Brothers and the J. E. Gilbert Co. were at Otter Creek, G. C. Perdue, Sr. was at Wylly, Si Hemingway and J. W. Turner were at Sumner, J. C. Hendricks was at Lennon, Jesse Peterson was at Raleigh, Peninsular Naval Stores was at Bronson. J. C. Hendricks started a branch operation between Bronson and Gulf Hammock known as the North Camp, later bought out by F.M. Bullard, Sr. The McKinnon still was also at Bronson. There was also a still at Williston and one at Romeo, I am still researching the still that was at Tigertown, Florida (between Levyville and Bronson.)

to the remote locations, the operator had to act as doctor, lawyer, sheriff and judge. The work was hard, the summer heat was sweltering, the flies and mosquitos swarmed, and all of that sounds terrible. But the turpentine people had a basic, raw vitality, a brawling lusty love of life that seems to be disappearing. There were very few fat turpentine workers. Nervous breakdowns were extremely rare among them.

Today, turpentine is a by-product of pulpwood processing. That, plus the development of cheaper substitutes and more profitable woodland management practices than turpentine meant the end of the industry after more than sixty years of existence in Levy County.

A few years ago, I rode my trailbike out to the site of the North Camp, later Bullard's still. Forty years after it closed, the house locations were still discernable. During the middle thirties, Lint Moring (a mere lad at the time) used to drive a school bus and Bullard's still was at the end of his routes. He spent the night there aboard the bus, with a kerosene lantern for heat on cold nights. Next morning, he loaded the kids, picked up more on the way, stopped in Bronson to grab his breakfast, then drove on to Williston where he was enrolled as a student.

To the rear of one old house site I found the skeletal remains of a model T Ford, along with a few broken bottles, fragments of ceramic tableware, a rusted and bent spoon; the somewhat pathetic artifacts of a whole way of life, a subculture now and forever gone.



Turpentine still of Epperson & Marshburn, about 1912. M.T. Marshburn (left) was the father of Frank Marshburn and stepfather of Bertie Hughes (on horse). The smaller of the two children in white dresses is the late Cicero Williams.

THE COURTHOUSE

Levy County built the first courthouse about fifteen years after the county was organized; the commissioners had earlier bought a residence for the purpose. Here is a condensation of the records, discrepancies and all.

April, 1850: Rented house from P. H. Davis, Levyville.

July, 1850: Voting precinct for the courthouse, Hatcher's place.

March, 1851: Commissioners propose to build courthouse, 20' x 30'.

March, 1852: Elijah Hunter paid one dollar rent for his house, "for use of said court."

March, 1853: Agreed to buy Moses Cason's house as the courthouse of Levy County. He is to be paid a total of \$175. in three payments (this is the first courthouse).

July, 1857: Ordered bids for jail to be built in Levyville.

October, 1858: James C. Howard permitted to cut timber off the public square in Levyville, yellow pine excepted.

April, 1860: "ordered that we proceed to build a courthouse at the present county site in Levyville...."

April, 1860: Voided order to build courthouse "until the voice of the people of the county can be heard...."

April, 1861: They issue "a call for bids to build a courthouse, 36 ft. square, two stories high..."

That's the one that was built. It was probably not burned, as subsequent entries will indicate. It was probably looted and records burned. However, the jail did burn.

May 13, 1861: Returns, election of May 6 for courthouse location, "Bronson Depo 48 votes, No. 4 Depo 80, Levyville 82."

July, 1866: Call for bids to complete courthouse.

June, 1866: James M. Janney had completed the courthouse.

May 4, 1867: L. B. Lewis contracted to finish the courthouse and build the jail.

And there is one set of discrepancies, including the mixup of dates. Lewis could have added on to the courthouse.

July 16, 1868: Obtained opinion of attorney general regarding paying for the jail, now burned.

November, 1868: Ordered that L. B. Lewis be paid for completing the jail, already burned.

February 6, 1869: The word, Bronson, written at the top of the first page of those minutes (apparently, first meeting in Bronson).

February 20, 1869: A recent act of the legislature has ordered the county commission to let the people vote on location of the county seat, so they plan such an election.

April 14, 1869: Rescinded the order for a new election. "we decide that Bronson is the County-Site-by-vote-of-the-people held on the 29th day of March, A.D., 1869 and permanently locate the County Site in Bronson under an Act passed at the last legislature."

May 3, 1869: Located courthouse, commencing at SE corner of NW 1/4 of NW 1/4 of Section 17, Township 12, Range 17 South and East, running N 3 chains, and

56 links, thence West 70 yards, thence South 70 yards, thence East 70 yards, containing one acre square, this land being granted by W. R. Coulter, Esq. to the County of Levy (I don't understand the R 17 South and East either).

May, 1869: Ordered contract let for tearing down, hauling, and rebuilding the courthouse now situated at Levyville (maybe it did not burn during the war).

June, 1869: All bids rejected, called for new bids.

August, 1869: "...void all proceedings of this Board during meeting held July 9, 1869 at Joseph C. Phelps'. Hereinafter, any Board member absent from meeting without satisfactory excuse shall be fined exactly \$50." A committee is to draft plans for a new courthouse--ordered old courthouse at Levyville sold to highest bidder.

September 7, 1869: "It appearing that an injunction have been Served on the Board of County Commissioners restraining for disposal of courthouse in Levyville, we employ Col. W. R. Coulter and J. F. Jackson to defend." Wm. C. Jones awarded bid to build courthouse, \$2200.

October 6, 1869: "Whereas the Writ of Injunction served up the Hon. Board by J. L. Turner was dissolved on October 4 by his Hon. Jesse H. Goss, judge of the 5th judicial court, therefore we order that the old courthouse at Levyville be sold."

November 13, 1869: Attorneys Coulter and Jackson to investigate the possibility of the Board bringing suit against James L. Turner. Levyville courthouse sold November 1, 1869 "To Brown Lodge No. 51 of free and accepted Mason."

March, 1870: Petition by 150 registered voters "to have another election permanently locating the County Site" (denied), petition "alleges former election to be illegal."

April, 1870: Resolution that, "hereafter, this Board will not listen to any petition presented at a called meeting, such petition seeking to undo action of the Board at a regular meeting."

June, 1870: They applied a tax to pay for the courthouse.

May 1, 1871: Old courthouse in Levyville sold to W. F. Smith.

September, 1871: Building contract let to W. A. Jones declared forfeited, Thomas H. Davis takes over.

February, 1874: Courthouse in Bronson still not finished by Thomas Davis (must have been finished shortly thereafter).

April, 1874: Accepted bid of Morgan Anderson to build jail.

March, 1877: L. B. Lewis "appointed a committee of one to see that a privy is built for the courthouse."

At this point, they must have all such necessary structures built and in use, as no further mention of construction is recorded for a few years.

March, 1893: Petition to move County site--election set August 22.

August 28, 1893: Vote canvass on moving courthouse location: at Bronson, 535; at Cedar Key, 394; at Ellzey, 1.

February 5, 1906: Accepted bid of Wagener and Dobson of Montgomery, Alabama, to build new courthouse like Starke's for \$15,000., "said building to have a dome in the center instead of a tower on the corner (the old Starke courthouse still exists)".

May 7, 1906: Joseph Boothby paid for installing new sills under old courthouse, also for moving it onto a 75' x 100' lot bought from W. J. Epperson.

September 2, 1907: \$8.00 contract to H. D. Cook to build a "water closet" (they used the terminology from England at the time).

September 8, 1908: B. L. Jones paid for erecting water tank, cypress.

April, 1909: Sheriff authorized to have courthouse dome painted, clerk to get cost estimate of installing acetylene light system.

June, 1909: Bennet Bros. Gas Engine Co. paid \$245. for installing acetylene lights.

July, 1909: J. F. Taylor paid \$8.00 "for building a powerhouse."

September 1910: Paid \$8.00, carbide for light plant.

January, 1912: The typewriter arrived in Levy County, all minutes are typed from this point on.

July, 1913: E. Walker, \$1.50 six batteries for pump (engine was probably a vertical Fairbanks Morse with make-and-break ignition). They plan to buy a galvanized tank and tower for the courthouse.

November, 1913: Plans to buy a Burroughs adding machine, \$325.

August, 1915: A referendum is planned on the issue of creating BLOXHAM COUNTY, FLORIDA from parts of Levy and Marion. Levy precincts voting will be Lebanon, Williston, Morrision, Raleigh, Gulf Hammock, Inglis. This issue was defeated.

March, 1918: Bids for building toilet at the courthouse and a "calaboose" at Inglis.

April, 1918: Clerk instructed to buy "a suitable U.S. Flag and hoist it up." (World War I is underway, the homefront is getting patriotic).

March, 1921: They are buying a Delco light plant for the courthouse, (the old carbide acetylene systems worked but the corrosive chemicals ate out the metal parts).

And that was as far as I traced the records. The present courthouse was finished in 1937 and the annex in 1963.



This Courthouse was built by Wagener & Dobson of Montgomery, Alabama in 1906. It was a duplicate of the Starke Courthouse except for the center dome which replaced a corner tower. This one was torndown in the thirties. The Starke building still exists. Photo from Mrs. Hade Locke, Chiefland.

From the December 11, 1902 edition of the Levy Times-Democrat, published at Bronson, here are some excerpts.

ELLZEY NEWS:

Our school is progressing nicely under the management of Miss Pearl Altman.

Little Guy Williams is very ill. N. J. Meeks and wife of the Gulf Hammock Fiber Factory have been visiting relatives here.

Mr. River and family of Judson arrived here Tuesday en route for Sutherland but turned back on account of the bad weather.

AND FROM THE TOWN AND COUNTRY NEWS COLUMN:

Dr. Bean will preach at the Evangelical Church Sunday.

Faircloth and Son, Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights, none better.

Don't be imposed upon by taking substitutes for Foley's Honey and Tar, Dr. J. M. Jackson.

A. Long, who brought a load of sugar cane to market Friday, brought some cane tassels as proof of the maturity of his crop.

Speaking of hard roads, there are 458 miles of public roads in Levy County, and at least 400 miles are hard roads - on the teams. A kidney or bladder trouble can always be cured by using Foley's Kidney Cure in time, Dr. J. M. Jackson.

Two double teams from Tuttle's Turpentine Still were made to run away Saturday night by the shooting of Roman candles. The teams crashed into each other at the water tank.

On the honor roll, fifth grade, are Anna Fowler, Constance Jakobie, Mary Dean, and Malcolm Sutton - from the second grade, Annie Hatcher.

W. H. Howell of Houston, Texas, writes - I have used Little Early Riser Pills in my family for constipation, sick headache, and most other ailments for years. They work wonders.

The Williston correspondent to the Times-Democrat says that if (name deleted) of Bronson would get him a horse and go to raising corn and cotton instead of trying to get up a wet and dry election, he, (name deleted), would do better.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup has been used for over sixty years by Millions of Mothers for complaining children. It soothes the child, allays all pain, cures wind colic, and is the best remedy for diarrhoea. Twenty five cents a bottle.

The heavy rains last week broke the record for December. It is estimated that between twelve and fifteen inches fell within 48 hours and the win blew a gale, too. A great deal of track was washed out and trains could run no further south than Bronson for three days. The passenger train came out of Cedar Key Thursday morning and did not enter that town again until Sunday night. The big sawmill of Fowler and Son at Lennon was shut down.

Dr. D. Hicks, Physician and Surgeon. Special attention to diseases of women and obstetrics. Promptness in all cases. Seven year's experience.

The old paper has become badly oxidized and very fragile. After all, it was printed 74 years ago. The editor was Oliver J. Farmer, who seems to have been rather outspoken and controversial. He carried on a running feud with the County Commissioners for years. If he thought some hanky-panky was going on, Oliver J. went charging in with banners flying. I have not researched the beginning nor the end of his editorial career in the area, but if you look up high on the west wall (faces HW 27-A) of the Masonic Lodge building in Bronson, you can see, faintly showing through overlays of white the large black letters reading, THE LEVY TIMES-DEMOCRAT. That and a few moldering old newspapers, such as the one I have, are the sole remaining vestiges of the old fighter's career.

The paper contains advertisements for coffins and caskets by C. G. Rawls and Company of Montbrook and C. W. Bauknight of Archer. This was a common practice in those days for department stores or large general stores. The coffins were displayed upstairs to the rear.

Several lawyers had advertisements. That was acceptable procedure then for them, as well as for dentists and doctors. The patent medicine commercials were something else - any one of them could cure - what-ails-you. One of them, Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup, would probably do just what the ad claimed: quiet the complaining child. It should have, it was loaded with morphine (no legal restrictions then). The kid got high on a morphine jag.

Note the price, twenty five cents. Today, the Winslow bottle is worth from three to four dollars as an antique.

The N. J. Meeks and wife apparently lived at the old fiber factory on Cow Creek, so the factory must have been going in 1902. I was at the site about fifteen years ago with Danny Yearty, and the rusting hulk of one of the old steam boilers was still there.

At the moment I don't know just where Sutherland was. Faircloth and Son, Blacksmiths, also made coffins. In case you don't know what a wheelwright was, he installed a new rim and spokes into the hub and iron tire of a worn-out wagon wheel. This required a highly skilled craftsman.

Among the many things that I do not know is the location of Tuttle's Turpentine Still or whatever became of Tuttle. From the item about (name deleted) of Bronson, the mention of raising cotton is significant. Cotton was the big cash crop in the Suwannee River Area until the boll weevil invasion in 1915. There was a gin across the street from Weeks Texaco at one time (to be very close to the railroad). In case you don't know what a gin is, it is a sort of factory which removes the seeds and compresses the cotton into bales.

Lennon goes well back into the 1800's and would have been a thriving operation of some size. Its population got up to around 1900 people. I was at the site of Lennon in recent years and stood there trying to visualize the streets, the houses, the people who once lived there. Now there was nothing left but three cows and the gentle wind, a silent and lonely place.

GENEALOGY IN GENERAL

The tracing of family lineages is a specialized branch of historical research and one in which I never became really proficient, at least not to the extent that some of my relatives and friends have. The true genealogist has learned exactly what old records to look for, finds out where to go to locate them, and assembles an efficient card file of the information he collects. It's a kind of Sherlock Holmes operation.

Genealogic research reveals some interesting characteristics of human beings and sociological trends in general. One such phenomena goes like this: A man named X would migrate to the colonies, say in 1750. Mr. X was fairly wealthy, educated, cultured, and recognized as having some aristocratic standing. Some years later, his grandson headed west or south and started a homestead. The grandson's environment was raw, harsh, and brutal, so he adapted to his environment. People adapt to changing environmental stimuli in a variety of responses and not with any predictable uniformity. The point is, a few generations after Mr. X's arrival in this country, some of his descendants were sorry trash.

That's one way it happened. Another factor is the genetic deterioration introduced into the family line by marriages, along with corresponding behaviour patterns and sets of values. The process was not always downhill; it happened in reverse, which leaves some fine people today with "skeletons in the closets". The undesirable influences in a family life did not always dominate the outcome of later generations; sometimes they were overpowered by the so called uppercrust forces.

In summation, I think that the general human-being level of a family lineage is influenced about equally by heredity and environment, plus a little genetic drift.

You may or may not be familiar with the novels of the late William Faulkner. He was a Mississippi writer who was awarded the Nobel prize for literature for his series of interlocking novels known as the Yoknapatawka Saga. His overall theme is the progressive decay of the old southern aristocracy over successive generations. His explanation of this is moralistic; he says the human deterioration was the sure retribution for two large sins; slavery and the taking of the land from the Indians.

Faulkner never pretended to be a sociologist, he wrote fiction, and the man was unmistakably a literary genius. Slavery did not originate in the South. The aristocracy did not take the Indian lands, the peasants did that and then the aristocracy in turn took the land from the peasants. The problem here is that too many

people tend to confuse fiction with reality. Too many people in other regions take the literal view of Erskine Caldwell's novels (he was a native of Georgia). Finally, the so-called aristocracy of the antebellum South was a tiny minority. Like the cowboys of the old West, they almost never existed.

William Faulkner was known as Bill by the few contemporary Mississippians who knew him during his early years. I remember seeing him at a Mississippi State football game during the late thirties. He was not very well known then. Another undergraduate who was from Oxford, Mississippi pointed him out to me. Faulkner ignored the football game--he looked at the spectators. I looked at Faulkner. It is extremely doubtful that anyone was watching me.

On the average, each of us in this area has more relatives around than may be realized, both here and in other states. I descended from ancestors named Price, Hall, Collins, Williams, Turnipseed, Reeves, Dorminey, Maxwell and Ellzey, so I probably have a bunch of distant cousins around here and so might you have. Here's how you start checking a suspected connection. Suppose you are named Ferguson and your people have been in Louisiana for several generations and you now live in Florida. Here, you see a Ferguson whose people have lived in Florida for several generations. Go back to the first Ferguson (your ancestor) to migrate to Louisiana and the first Ferguson ancestor of the Florida family. If both came from the same place in Virginia, you are on the trail, especially if the life span times match. Now, go to that place in Virginia and search the records dating back from the time of migration. If you find both Fergusons recorded as being sons of Jebediah Ferguson, and the dates all match, then old Jebediah is the common ancestor of both lines of Fergusons. You can even figure out the cousin-removed relationship of a descendant of one line to a descendant in the other line. This is not as easy as it may sound. You may run upon two old fellows, both named Benjamin Ferguson and be unable to determine which one fits into the line you are tracing. You can get stumped right there. (Stumped: the process of stalling a wagon by jamming the same over a stump.)

When your grandmother is gone, she will never tell you anything else about your people. You should ask her now and be sure to write down what she says, and preserve the writing. Be it ever so humble, there is no one else quite like your own family. We must return to the family love and ties that were basic in America's foundations and strength.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In the spring term of Levy County Court, 1867, the number of persons charged with some of the offenses went like this: 10 with fornication, 3 adultery, 1 assault, 1 bigamy, and 1 with murder, and that's a typical docket during those years. The identities of some of those charged are surprising; some of them were leading citizens. Some of the trials were probably real doozies and must have attracted an impressive accumulation of spectators. The frontier lawyers were more ham actors than attorneys, which should not be surprising; these court trials were the soap operas of that day and the lawyers made the most effective adaptations of their performances to fit the situation. I wish I could have heard some of that impassioned oratory.

In that term of court, one man charged with adultery turns up three years later as sheriff. Shortly thereafter, the state is charging him with embezzlement. A street in Bronson, well over a hundred years old, is apparently named after him. Maybe he had earned this distinction; there is no way to know what additional activities and accomplishments he had to his credit.

Going back to the County Commission's records, there are numerous instances of inquests, lunacy hearings, rewards, and other hassles. We start quoting.

June, 1851: "Ordered Samuel Johnson to come forward on this day to give Bond as pilot and he has not done so."

March 8, 1852: "Sheriff is ordered to furnish this Board with paper, one bottle of ink, and one dozen pens."

January, 1857: Sheriff Prevatt paid "for taking the senses of poor children."

July, 1879: The sheriff was authorized to have a well dug and a pump installed for the jail.

August, 1879: Sheriff was "ordered to have a covering put over the pump and a trough for watering placed at the same."

November 22, 1880: "To request Governor George F. Drew to suspend tax collector John C. McGrew for failing to report accounts to the Board."

November 22, 1880: McGrew still balks, so they instruct the clerk to contact the state's attorney.

January 3, 1881: The governor has just suspended McGrew.

February 14, 1881: McGrew finally turns in a tax collector's report.

August 7, 1881: They are still "paying out fees to McGrew."

February 6, 1882: McGrew's bondsmen being sued (later settled out of court).

July 3, 1899: "Whereas, on the night of June 18, 1899, the County Jail at Bronson, Levy County, Florida, was broken, and William B. Williams, who was confined in said jail under sentence of death, escaped and is still at large and a fugitive from justice--now, therefore, be it resolved that this Board do hereby offer a reward of \$50. for the arrest and delivery of said Williams."

January 1, 1900: "do hereby authorize the payment of \$3 for lumber used for the said Williams' coffin."

October 2, 1899: They paid the various costs of "State -vs- Bud Slaughter," including "\$2 to J. P. Faircloth and Son, Blacksmiths, for making coffin for Bud Slaughter."

August 6, 1900: Dr. Hicks paid \$1 for jail visit to Will Montgomery.

September 3, 1900: Sheriff Sutton paid 70 cents for R. R. fare, dead body of Will Montgomery."

October 7, 1901: They were issuing weapons permits during these years. There was a handgun (I never heard of it) known as the Hopkins and Allen. Marlin rifles were about as numerous as Winchesters.

May 5, 1902: Sheriff H. S. Sutton sues Levy County Commissioners "request a change of venue."

October 6, 1902: Inquest of L. B. (Britt) Lewis and wife. Coronors jury: M. F. Fowler, B. A. Chesser, A. L. Long, W. T. Tuttle, L. J. Smith, J. F. Smith. Ben Friedman was coroner, J. R. Willis "wrote the testimony." J. P. Faircloth and Son, Blacksmiths, were "paid \$10 for building the coffins for Faircloth and Smith." Sheriff Sutton was "reimbursed \$30 for erection of Double Gallows for Faircloth and Smith." Isaac Liferedge was a state witness. C. Wellman was paid for "service securing confession of Faircloth and Smith."

We break here for a short commentary. C. Wellman did not beat the two suspects with a rubber hose. He was placed in an adjacent cell, pretending to be drunk, got them to talking, they told the whole story. Faircloth and Smith are buried in the Hamp Smith cemetery, The Lewis Couple in the old Bronson Cemetery.

December 1, 1902: "to inform the Governor that the Sheriff has presented a frivolous bill and obtained money under false pretenses and recommends that he be suspended."

December 29, 1903: J. A. Williams, attorney, retained to investigate sheriff's bills.

January 5, 1903: Clerk instructed to "find out the amount and whereabouts of lumber used in erecting gallows."

February 3, 1903: Board requests state audit of Sheriff's office before Sutton goes out.

October 5, 1903: A notice to H. S. Sutton, ex-sheriff, and his bondsmen that Sutton owes the County "\$230.47 more or less."

The outcome of this is not recorded. In 1907, H. S. Sutton secured a permit to carry a .38 Smith and Wesson. Shortly thereafter he moved to Miami. In 1973, his son was camping at Manatee Springs State Park.

October 5, 1908: The Knight Crockery Co., \$8 for one dozen spittoons. It would appear that "J. P. Faircloth and Son, Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights" were indispensable adjuncts of local government in those days. The 1908 ceramic spittoons were probably the ones removed from the courthouse about twenty years ago.

THE OLD AUTOMOBILES

In 1913, a total of 95 automobiles were registered in Levy County. Most of the tags cost five dollars. Forty-nine Fords were followed by twenty-seven Buicks, while none of the other brands were more than three or four each. The Chevrolet would not be on the market until two or three years later. The records show four Cadillacs, four Mitchells, three Overlands, three Hupmobiles, and two Regals. There was one Maxwell, one Brush and one Haynes.

The Haynes was owned by R. M. King of Lebanon, the Maxwell by G. G. Jackson of Williston, and the Brush by H. D. Cook of Bronson. The automotive population of a town might provide a rough clue as to the size of the place, plus its relative affluency. Williston led with 34 owners, followed by Morriston with 11, Bronson with 8, and Montbrook with 6. Morriston and Montbrook must have been flourishing along here.

The Cedar Key total of 2 is misleading as to the town's population. At the time, the road into town was this low-tide-only layout, and the oyster shells would have really cut the narrow, high pressure clincher tires of that day. So the people went into and out of Cedar Key mostly by trains, horse-drawn rigs and boats. Today, as you drive over the Highway 24 causeway into Cedar Key, at low tide, if you will look to your left, particularly when you are crossing a bridge, you may see an elongated oyster bar going parallel to Highway 24. You will be looking at the old road. It is of uniform width and shows occasional gaps where old bridges once spanned the boat channels. Remember, this relic is visible at low tide only. Listed as living at Vista and owning a Ford is one T. J. Yearty. I presume this to be Tom Yearty. I have been told that he at one time started up a factory at Vista to make automobile tire carcasses from cabbage palm fibers.

People on the move around here in 1913 still traveled mostly by train, horse-back, buggy, surrey, wagon and walking. A few elderly types who wished to exhibit a debonair image used a kind of two-wheeled buggy known as a gig. I can remember those, even if I am extremely young for my age.

Let me now move across a time gap in 1930. I do not have the totals, just the make of car and the owner's

name. Some of these owners are still living, others have passed on.

Gib Patterson (Bronson) had a 1924 Ford Skeeter. He still had the thing during the nineteen fifties. This was a T Model with an accessory "racing" body replacing the original body. L. L. Johns had a 1925 Dover truck. I never saw one of those.

W. E. Duden from Cedar Key had a 1926 Ford sedan. Mr. Duden later moved to Bronson, then retired and moved to Old Town. J. C. Pons at Judson had a 1927 Jewett sedan. Charlie Glover (Bronson, I think) had a Jordan Coach. John Harvey (Williston) had a 1921 Hanson Touring.

The list goes on and on. The cars are gone and so are most of the owners. Some of the departed owners were friends of mine. I can imagine their amazement, in 1930, if they had been told that their cars would be very expensive in 1976.

Antique car buffs will know more about this than I do, but how about the total value of this list, from 1930: 1929 Ford Sedan (Charlie McKoy), 1929 Chevrolet Sedan (G. M. Owens), 1928 Ford Roadster (Lewis Renfro), 1926 Ford (John Yearty), 1928 Dodge (Wm. E. Rivers). All of those owners are still living at the time this is being written.

The people bought their tags in 1930. They were soon to be hit by the Great Depression of the nineteen thirties, and then World War II. Some of those old cars would later be modified into rickety pickup trucks, others into four-wheeled wagons, anything to squeeze out the last utilitarian ounce. The people experienced the sociological trauma of a fast change from the exuberant hey-you-kid Land Bubbles of the twenties to the grim how-can-I-get-on-the-WPA of the thirties, as President Roosevelt's resonant voice came out of the old battery powered Zeniths and Atwater Kents telling them that all they had to fear was fear itself.

It is tempting to say that 1913 was a much happier time, when Mr. J. H. Day of Sumner might have been driving his Hupmobile very carefully along the shell road across No. 4 Channel heading into Cedar Key. It is easy to confuse nostalgia with utopia. I am glad I live right now. Life really is beautiful and we should make the most of it. Just think of the fun I could have if I had a 1925 Dover truck.

OLD SCHOOLS

When a particular school was "ordered established" in the old records, that does not necessarily designate the beginning date of that school. The entry does show that the school existed at least that far back. In the early years the schools were privately funded or subscription financed and would not show on the records being researched in this instance. Here are some first dates of mention.

September, 1859: School at Levyville, another at Little Raulerson Field.

December, 1859: "Wacassassa Schoole House", also "Bronson in Dist. 4."

July, 1860: They established a system of public school which were probably halted by the onset of the civil war. Trustees at Bronson were D. P. Holder, E. Walker, Wm. F. Smith; at Wekiva School: John Marcomb, Samuel White, Daniel P. Morgan; at "Wacassassa Schoole at Copper Springs": Willis R. Medlin, A. B. Wood, Thomas W. Ashley.

July, 1860: School near Black Neck known as Willow Oak.

June, 1861: Ordered school at "Wacassassa Schoole House at or near Sawgrass Church". Trustees: George H. Hires, Bryant Smith, and a Mr. Shepherd. Another school is mentioned at Bivens Hammock, at or near Black Neck, Trustees: L. B. Stokes, Samuel H. Worthington, Granville H. Worthington. Also named is "Parsimons" (persimmon) School, trustee: Peter McGuiness, John Waterston, John J. Wester.

April, 1861: "School now taught at Cedar Key School House to be a public school", trustees: Joseph G. Jenkins, Edmun Kelsey, S. H. Edwards.

September 1861: School at Rosville (Rosewood).

February, 1870: A. R. Carter, member of the "Board of Public Instruction."

August, 1877: Willis School House (Williston).

September, 1878: Scholarships to East Florida Seminary (Gainesville): James P. Jackson, Florence McIlvaine.

August, 1883: S. L. Carter was superintendent of schools.

May, 1884: They mention the Agricultural College at Lake City (will later be moved to Gainesville and become the University of Florida).

August, 1886: C. H. Phinney was superintendent of schools.

February, 1892: Lebannon School House is mentioned.

July, 1917: A school was at Vista.

About eighty years ago, a slender young lady named Lavada Osteen boarded the train at Bronson early each morning, alighted near Cedar Key and proceeded by rowboat to Dry Creek School on the Rowe Hudson place. She was the teacher. We still have commuting teachers today but not like that one. At that time, Ida Prevatt Larramore (Tallahassee) was a very small child; she remember Miss Osteen as being dark haired and very pretty. Lavada Osteen married Frank Faircloth and some of her descendants around today are named Sims, McKoy, and Smith. Her father was the Confederate veteran Sol Osteen and she was the

granddaughter of the above-named Willis B. Medlin.

In 1894, the total count of schools must have hit an all-time high in Levy County. Here is the list, all 52 of them.

Bronson	Wolf Sink
Cedar Key	Copper Sink
Atsena Otie	Ellzey
Levyville	Ebenezer
Adamsville	Wes. Smith
Rock Hammock	Pine Level
Osteen	Gulf Hammock
Mt. Zion	Red Hollow
Williston	Long Pond
Fellowship	Barco
Lebannon	Shell Pond
Hardee	Cason
New Zion	Lake Lynn
Albion	Centre Point
Wacahoota	Sumner (Shiloh)
Centre	Deer Pen
Pine Point	Providence
Four Mile	Browns
Rocky Pond	Wolf Harbor
Otter Creek	Owen Prairie
Stafford's Pond	Shell Mound
Iron Sink	Pleasant Hill
Double Sink	Creech
Orange Hill	Unity
Union	Sand Slough
Rosewood	W. T. Watson

Later during that decade, these also existed: Fort Clinch, Verbena Dale, Prospect, Tooks, and Sanchez. The towns of Meredith and Wyly also had schools, there was one at Strong Landing. There was one known as the Suwannee School, it might have been at Fort Fannin. Here is a list from May 1915.

Bronson	Williston
Cedar Key	Fort Clinch
Morrison	Ellzey
Chiefland	Unity
Union	Montbrook
Lebannon	Inglis
Center	Wolf Sink
Sand Slough	Double Sink
Rocky	Copper Sink
Lightsey	Otter Creek
Pine Level	Four Mile

Most of these schools were elementary schools with very small enrollments. Some of them existed for a short time only. To further confuse the picture, the names were always being changed. If they had a Jones School and Mr. Edwards became the newly ordained big wheel of the community, the school became the Edwards School. Due to the name confusion, it is doubtful that an accurate total of all schools existing since the county began could be compiled. A reasonable estimate would be from eighty to eighty-five.



In 1892, this was about one fourth of the students at the Bronson School. The other three pictures still exist, so does part of that old building, now used as a residence.

THE SYNTHETIC MAN

There comes a time to be candid and that is not an easy achievement. One problem is that you are never quite sure that you have succeeded.

So much of our world (our activities, our environment, our motivations) is synthetic that we tend to blur or confuse reality with the artificial.

Consider a football game situation. Here we have the offense team (for the benefit of persons who are not sports fans, the term offensive does not necessarily indicate a need for deodorant) on the one yard line. The quarterback carries the ball. His objective is to cross the opponents' goal line. In the real world, the young man would have no reason whatever for wanting to transport this ball anywhere. But within the synthetic framework of a game, he assumes a motivation and gives his forward lunge all the effort he can. Maybe football is basically symbolic.

But move the quarterback in time to 1840 to where he is in the act of crossing the Waccasassa River in Devil's Hammock. As he approaches the opposite bank, he becomes aware of a large alligator chasing him. Alligators are unpredictable. One might resent an invasion of his territory, at any rate, here comes these large rows of teeth aimed at our hero's rear. There would be nothing synthetic nor symbolic about the man's motivation at that moment. He would do a wheelie and emerge from the water with such acceleration that he could go up a tree by merely coasting up it. We may assume that the survival probability for football players is much higher than that for individuals being chased by large alligators. But this situation would be very real; no rules, no referees, no cheerleaders, just raw reality.

Now let us view a lean hunter about to shoot a fat squirrel in the great forest of 1820 around the Otter Springs area. In his eyes there is a serious glint of purpose because that man is hungry and a hungry man of 1820 could easily visualize a fat squirrel roasting over hot coals. He raises his old muzzle loader ever so carefully and takes precise aim. That man lived in a real world, no pretending there.

Then there is today's hunter, climbing out of his Bronco wearing snake boots, a stylish hunting coat, and carrying a veritable cannon of a gun. This guy looks around the area leased by his hunting club, for squirrels--not that he is hungry, he is usually fatter than the squirrels. There he stands, his pockets crammed with government licenses, his every move regulated, and his sport being assaulted by so-called conservationists who want to ban all such sports except their own. So the modern hunter plays his game, too, just as much so as a tennis player at Chiefland High School does.

Some friends of mine in the general area of the lower Suwannee are fox hunters. Fox hunting is very different

from squirrel hunting. The hunters do not wish to kill or capture the fox; in fact, they are mildly displeased if the hounds actually catch the fox. The big deal here is the chase, plus being out there in the still of the mysterious night with congenial friends. It appears that you must be a fox hunter to really understand the sport. They also live out their fantasy.

In 1810, a lone foot-traveler going down a frontier trail would have paused to contemplate the approach of the December night. He builds his little fire under a large liveoak and while it burns, he puts together a crude lean-to of palmetto fronds. As the cold rain starts, he shivers and lays more sticks on his fire, huddles under his shelter, and heats a strip of salted venison over his fire. He is out there in the cold night and the rain all by himself, and out in the darkness, panthers and bears are moving around, and maybe even an Indian who could be in a foul mood.

Today, we go camping with nylon tents, propane stoves, travel trailers and motor homes. This, too, is pretending, not really camping. A modern camper is a small apartment, luxurious and mobile. Imagine that old fellow in 1810 crawling out of his cold, wet palmetto shelter and stepping into a modern camper; warm, dry and lighted. He couldn't believe the food, the sensual comfort of the beds, in short, he would be utterly dumfounded. Just a simple (to us) object like the electric light would have blown his mind. But the man in 1810 was real and his world was real. There was no room for hypocrisy and no need for pretense.

People buy antiques, some of which they have no real use for whatsoever. Some of these people do their thing from a motive of genuine nostalgia, others collect the pieces like jewelry, or to give themselves a posture of exclusiveness - a sort of see-here-I-have-more-marbles-than-you.

And all these people try to rationalize their games into a semblance of justification in the real world. The football player is a symbol of the ancient man charging through the ranks of an enemy tribe, carrying his child whom he is rescuing from that enemy, or he might be trying to get clear with a haunch of meat he swiped from them. The modern hunter thinks vaguely of the meat he just might bring home (at a dollar an ounce). Each one of these people deludes himself that his own rationalization is perfectly logical.

Well, take mine, for example. I fondly believe that my camper enables me to be at a given place at certain times, and in some foggy way, that is a desired achievement for me. So I indulge in my fantasy just like those other people.

I do not know the meaning of all this, I just see a phenomena that indicates some kind of retreat from our synthetic civilization. I don't know the answers, I am a fugitive along with the others.

1830, SOME SPECULATIONS

The first American census of Florida was compiled that year, fifteen years before the territory became a state. Only the heads of households were listed and certainly not all of them. Most of Levy County was then part of Alachua County. We are looking at the Alachua County names, pulled out of the whole state census. Alachua had been formed in 1824 from parts of St. Johns and Duval and went from the Georgia line almost to Tampa. The whole southern half of the peninsula was Mosquito County which changed its name to Orange County in 1845. Alachua County did not touch the Atlantic coast in 1830.

Here are some of the names. It is interesting to speculate on possible connections with the people who later appear in Levy County.

Simon Beckham: People by that name are all around, in Cedar Key, for one place. I do not know if they are all related and descended from Simon or if there are unrelated groups of them.

John Becks: Probably Beck, and Becks, Yeartys, and Hudsons descended from a Beck ancestor in Levy County. Again, this John may not be in that line.

James, Robert and William Bevin: A small lake in Gainesville is still called Bevin's Arm.

John Boyer: Well, Neal Boyer lives in Chiefland and there is Judge Tyrie Boyer.

James and Wiley Brooks: Several families by that name are around.

Sylvester Bryant: Twenty years later, he turns up living on the road from Fort Fanning to Fort Jennings.

James, Samuel, Jr. and Haburn Burnett: The James Burnett now living in Bronson is somewhat too young to have been listed in the 1830 census.

Isaac Carter: The Levyville Carters came from Mississippi at the close of the Civil War, so the 1830 Isaac is not in their direct lineage, but could be related back in the older North Carolina generations of Carters.

John, Ransom, Samuel and James Cason: Twenty years later, Moses Cason was living in Levyville.

George G., Thomas B., and Charles H. B. Collins: My own great-great-grandfather was Ebenezer Collins from Scotland. I get the impression that the Collins clan is very numerous and the families have host connections with each other.

James Coulter: Twenty-nine years later, William R. Coulter donated the courthouse site in Bronson.

Alexander Crews: Some years after this, Jim Crews homesteader near Bud Collier's place.

James and John Cannon: I do not at this time know whether they connect with the present Cannons.

Enoch, Jr., Enoch, Sr., and Abraham Daniel: One of the first two listed with a government Indian agent, but I don't know which one.

Edward and John Dixon: One of them was probably the ancestor of the late Jesse Dixon of Bronson and Leesburg.

Samuel Geiger: Ulrich Kegar and wife Appolina migrated from Germany (Salzburger) and he was a soldier in the Revolutionary War. His son Abraham anglicized the name to Geiger. I find Abraham's son David (1795-1870) living in Georgia. The possibility is strong that the Levy County Geigers descended from Ulrich Kegar. Incidentally, the name was never Gigger, which is a corruption when applied to Geiger. For all I know, there may be some people whose real name is Gigger.

David Higginbotham: The mystery here is how they managed to keep some semi-illiterate government employees from chopping and mutilating the name. Caleb Higginbotham and Joseph Higginbotham were in the 1852 Indian wars. That could be the original name or merely a deviation in spelling. I remember a charming young lady in my classes at Chiefland High School named Coylene Higginbotham. She married Johnny Sims of Bronson. Another researcher and friend of mine, Velma (Prevatt) Worley of Ocala, descended from the Higginbothams.

THE QUINCEY FAMILY

Here is the lineage behind the little girl in the picture:

1. John Quince (earlier De Quince, later Quincey) married Ann Lambert in the parish of Elm in the Isle of Ely, 1794. John Lambert who died there in 1808 was Ann's father (not documented). This is in a letter by Julie Quincey in 1976 from England to her Aunt Blanche Quincey Stubbs, Deland, Florida.

2. Their son John Lambert Quincey (1797-1846) married Mary Ann Jennings. This is still in England.

3. Their son, Dr. John William Quincey (1828-1869) married Sarah Hinton, in the United States.

4. Their son John W. Quincey married Mary Sheffield.

5. Their son Samuel (not to be confused with his great-uncle by the same name) married Annie Scarborough.

6. Their daughter Faye married Bruce Wiggins.

7. And there's their daughter Tracy with her grandfather by the old cane mill. That's seven generations, eight if John Lambert could be validated as being in the lineage.

After the French prefix De was dropped, the name was spelled Quinsee at times. Dr. John W. Quincey came to Levy County in 1854 from England. He married Sarah Hinton. The Hinton place was near the Suwannee River and was later known as the Greene Chaires house. Some time later, his brother Samuel (1838-1918) and John Garner (1828-1899) started from England to join Dr. John. John Garner had married their sister Elizabeth (1833-1885). For some reason the ship was diverted to New York, they landed there and got to Levy County two years later. The Dr. Quincey was a political fugitive from having fallen into disfavor with the British government. He had two children, Minnie, who died at age nineteen, and John W. who married Mary Sheffield. Their children in order of descending age are Samuel, William, Albert, Knox, Clark, Tom, Stacy, and Loy.

Sam, a retired minister, married Annie Scarborough. Their children: Margaret married Austin McElroy, Clyde married Peggy Ruff, Donald married Harlene Walker, Samuel Rudolph (Runt) married Janie Bailey, Elsie married Albert Wilson, Annette married Gad Sanchez, Rebecca married Curtis Sheppard, Jewel married Lloyd McElroy, Frank married Clara Nelle Long, Jack married Bernice Durrance, Faye married Bruce Wiggins. To go further, Clyde's son Danny Quincey has a small son named Dan and he is an eighth generation descendant in the known lineage.

Dr. Quincey, his brother Samuel, and John Garner were all Confederate soldiers, Dr. Quincey served as a surgeon and was a county commissioner after the war. John Garner was a brickmason. He made his own bricks, as was the common practice of the time. Samuel smelted the iron ore and refined the pig iron which he made into plows and other implements, all at a location still known today as the Iron Forty. The Iron Forty grew into a hangout for gamblers, so Samuel sold out and operated a blacksmith shop at the upper ford of the Waccasassa River on the road from Levyville to Bronson. A few of his homemade plows still exist with his initials S stamped into the metal.

Samuel married Sarah Bird, daughter of John Bird of Kings' Lynn. They came to the United States soon after they were married. In Florida they first lived at White Springs and their first child, Mary, is buried there.



Little Tracy Wiggins with her grandfather, the Rev. Sam Quincey. He was the major source of information about this family.

They came to Levy County just before the Civil War (probable, not certain). They moved to Douglas, Georgia in 1901. He is buried in Levyville.

Samuel was a remarkable person. Although he had little formal education, he read so much that he became well self-educated and something of a scholar. He never lost his British accent, loyalty to the Crown, and love for his native land. In his branch of the Quinceys, a traditional Yuletide custom still survives, that of the Olde English Christmas plum pudding. The recipe has been handed down through many generations. The pudding is made weeks ahead, tied into a large ball of thin cloth and boiled for several hours, then hung to drip and dry. At Christmas, it is re-steamed, opened and placed on a large platter, topped with holly and borne triumphantly to the festive board (old word for table) with flaming brandy poured over it, then served with Sarah Bird's brandy sauce. I wish I could have seen that, it must be a nostalgic and thought-provoking sight, those happy people with that Christmas plum pudding just like their ancestors had long ago in the old country.

Today, the size of the Quincey family is staggering to contemplate. If they ever have a complete family reunion of all the American and English cousins, and all of them come, they'll need to rent a football stadium. When I was a teacher, some of the Quincey children were my students and some of the Quincey adults are my friends. Among the foremost impressions I have of them are that they are gentle people, staunch Christians, and most of them have a great sense of humor. All of them know how to do some productive thing and they work. I never heard of a Quincey looking for a handout.

EBENEZER

Ebenezer Baptist Church was organized in 1860. A few pages of the first records were lost when the books were taken to Jacksonville to write the History of the Southern Baptist. After that, the oldest minutes they have left are from a meeting in August, 1865. P. B. Colson preached, I. Highsmith was clerk, and three converts were baptized: Joseph F. Prevatt, James W. Beville, and Nancy Rucker. The last person was of the Negro race. They were all Christians.

The Baptist church in Mississippi to which I first belonged was organized in 1828 and of the sixteen charter members, five were Negro persons. Racial attitudes were different then from today, much different.

Until 1869, the Ebenezer records do not mention a building. The place of worship was referred to as the "Arbor." In their building plans they specify where the "lights" are to be located. That's the old word for window. I am told that the first building was made of logs, it burned in 1890, and the one in the picture was the second.

Pine Grove Baptist Church was organized as a mission by Ebenezer Baptist Church on July 10, 1871. Pine Grove charter members coming from Ebenezer were Ella S. Sheffield, James K. Sheffield, Elizabeth Sheffield, Julia C. Sheffield, Jane E. Davis, Mary F. McDonnell, Mary E. Moore, Harriet Ann Sanchez, Mary A. Love, Elizabeth Colson, Martha Rogers, Mary D. Loper, Francis J. Colson, Sarah F. Love, Julia A. Smith, and Georgia Ann Brock.

The first mention of the pastor's salary was in 1898. He got \$50 a year. Here is a list of the pastors and the year each started.

1860 (organized)
1865 P. B. Colson
1867 Simion Sheffield
1876 Simion Sheffield
1877 Z. A. Crumpton
1879 Z. A. Crumpton
1881 J. K. Sheffield
1882 J. P. Abbott
1883 J. K. Sheffield
1883 Simion Sheffield
1885 W. S. Perry
1855 P. A. McOllister
1896 P. A. McOllister

1898 P. Faircloth
1898 Z. A. Crumpton
1900 J. K. Sheffield
1901 Z. A. Crumpton
1905 W. J. Marton
1907 W. J. Folks
1908 J. K. Sheffield
1911 Z. A. Crumpton
1912 J. K. Sheffield
1914 J. W. Griffin
1918 J. L. Norris
1919 J. W. Griffin
1921 J. R. Douglas
1924 C. J. Bruner
1928 J. R. Douglas
1929 W. H. Barnes
1930 H. G. McElroy
1931 R. M. Stanley
1934 J. L. Norris
1935 E. T. Vining
1935 J. G. Knight
1938 Austin McElroy
1944 C. H. Churchwell
1948 Perry Edwards
1949 C. L. Crissey
1951 Sam Quincey
1958 Sam Quincey
1959 Virgil Smith
1960 W. E. Johnson
1968 Lonnie Dobb
1971 Edward N. Hatch

The church clerks and the year each started follow.

1860 I. Highsmith
1865 J. F. Prevatt
1867 N. R. Carter
1876 J. R. McGrath
1877 E. T. Geiger
1885 W. P. Geiger
1885 J. B. Smith
1901 W. P. Geiger
1935 Cleve Geiger
1968 J. D. Munn

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BITS AND PIECES OF BRONSON

This will certainly not be a coherent history of the place, instead, we present a few odds and ends. Bronson is old enough that none of the original town is left unless it is part of the house now occupied by the Mayo family. That house originally faced west of Tyre's Alley and was probably built in the 1840's before the railroad and Main Street appeared. Along came the railroad and whoever lived in the house simply reversed the front and rear of his house. That end of Tyre's Alley was closed, the rest of it has been renamed Magnolia Street by some misguided and unauthorized developer. This house is labeled the Willis house on our chart and another house, not as old, was also called by that name. It was about a block away and has been torn down.

The Willis family and the Eppersons lived in both Bronson and Williston so that from the period after the beginning of Williston, the two towns are inextricably intertwined as far as family relatives are concerned.

Local legend has it that the oldest house in Bronson stood where Week's Texaco Station is now. I remember it, a nondescript (naturally, after 140 years) frame structure. Twenty years before the Civil War, houses in Bronson were made of lumber instead of logs, which is to be expected, as the place started its existence as a sawmill and trading post. The bank was built in 1910 and folded in the early thirties when most of the other banks did. We are talking about the building itself in 1910. I do not know if other banks were here before that.

South Main Street (now in woods) once had a crate mill, ice plant, cold storage, and Coca Cola bottling works. I have found a Bronson Coca Cola Bottle of the original straight sided shape and made of the old manganese glass that turns lavender-purple after some years in the sunshine. Then the bottling plant moved to the corner of Oak and Bean Streets, then into the empty bank building during the 1930's. Eventually, it was moved to Trenton and finally closed in recent years. Hatcher's Store, operated by descendants of the pre-Civil War Hatchers. It closed about 1956. It was the pre-Civil War Hatchers. It closed about 1956. It was the one with a palm tree growing through a hole in the

porch floor and up through another hole in the porch roof (all old stores had porches). The palm tree is still there.

We do know the history of one of the Main Street stores. The first building was erected by W. J. Epperson, the drugstore business was started by a Mr. Hughes in 1915 in that building. The business was bought out by Mr. Jesse Dixon in 1917. The second building was built in 1925 for about \$2,500 as a duplex store and restaurant, and bought by Mr. Dixon in 1933 for \$300. He moved his drugstore business into the second building, then had the building moved over to the corner of Hathaway Drive (Alt. 27) and Picnic Street in 1935. The whole thing was bought out by Macie Petersen (same Macie who wrote the Chit Chat column in The Chiefland Citizen) and her husband. They sold to Alice and Dogan Cobb in 1954, they sold to Harriet and Delbert Hitchings (noted for fabulous hamburgers) in 1960, they sold to Edith and Leon Wooten in 1972. The Wootens operate it as a sundries and clothing store, but some of the people still call it "the drugstore". This was a proprietary drugstore, I don't know if it ever had a pharmacist.

The Boyd Hotel turned into a resthome and burned about eighteen years ago. Mr. Poly Horne was a resident. The original business area of the town was along Oak Street before the Civil War, the part of that street now closed, behind Miller's Real Estate.

And now, a word about the pond with a false bottom. This is a small cypress pond in the middle of town. Its bottom is a mass of roots, moss fibers and muck and is about twenty five inches thick. You can cut a hole through the bottom and there's water. You cut the longest switch you can find, stick it down, and touch nothing. Cattle used to get stuck in there, with all four legs punched through the false bottom, until it was fenced off. You might say it is a pond with a roof over it. Anyway, I got out of there.

Not much of Bronson's history has been preserved, just enough to show that a lot of history was here and has been lost.

THE POLITICAL RALLIES

At the behest of the Levy County Democratic Executive Committee I used to set up public address systems for these affairs, see to it that a program was properly planned, arrange for a master of ceremonies, etc.

One night in Gulf Hammock about twenty years ago, I got the shock of the week, and not from the P.A. system. What I saw in action was one of the last of the old orators. Buzzy Green was starting his political career by running for the newly-created office of Public Defender. He had conflicting rallies so his father, Lex Green, came out of retirement to speak in behalf of his son. Now, I am glad Buzzy couldn't get there, I would have missed witnessing the old master in action. The old classic oratory was a form of heavily dramatic acting, and Lex Green was one of its most talented exponents. This is how he went about his performance.

First, he set the stage. Chubby Petteway was the M.C. and he and I were sitting behind the speaker's platform. While some other candidate was up there telling the voters how great he was, Lex quietly inquired as to the identity of two elderly speculators out front. We told him, old man Jones from Cedar Key and Mr. Jenkins from Chiefland (not their real names).

Now, Lex was up. He thanked the M. C. like Chubby had just saved him from drowning, then turned to gaze soulfully at his audience. Then he turned it on, starting with stentorian tones, rolling out the sonorous and poetic words with a musical cadence, and ending the passage by tapering down to an emotional whisper. It was a true art form, some real Americana.

"My friends, as the sun is slowly sinking in the golden west over there and the shades of night come upon us, I see the sunset in the seamed and careworn faces of some old friends out there, and, indeed, the shades of night are falling on our lives, too, and this is old Lex Green standing humbly before you asking you to vote for my boy (pause, to look around in supplication). There's Old Man Jones, there, from Cedar Key, I haven't seen him for many years now (Old Man Jones nearly fell off his stump, he didn't know Lex, had never heard of him) and Old Man Jenkins from Chiefland (same reaction), they know what I'm talking about."

I sat there in amazement. The old gentleman was one of the best of a vanishing breed, possibly the last. Buzzy got elected.

Then there was Mr. Will Coulter (in older times) who refused to make speeches at the rallies. He drove around the county in a buggy carrying on a person-to-person campaign. For him, it worked. At a Williston rally, while a candidate was speaking, some wag out in the dark shouted,

"Aw, go on back to --, you (deleted)! You don't belong in the United States nohow!"

Many of the local contenders followed a formula at these rallies. After being introduced, each would stand about four feet behind the microphones (hoping no one could hear him) and rapidly mutter something like,

Thanky Mist Chairman and wanna thanky good

ladies of the P.T.A. for this here fine mullet and swamp cabbage (burp!). Come May the fifth jest kindly member vote fer old Callahan fer Commissioner. Thanky ver' much."

Whoosh! He got off that platform in short order. Seriously, some of these men were really suffering. I usually felt sorry for them and tried to help them all I could. But one night at Williston I was seized with an inspiration.

People were complaining that they never could hear one particular candidate at all. I tried in vain to pick him up with the front mikes, next I tried to coax him closer to the mikes--no good, he backed further away. So when we came to the Williston rally I was ready, with a boom-suspended mike in the center rear of the speaking platform. He never noticed it, he backed right up under it and his voice came thundering out of the horns louder than anyone else had been. He almost jumped out of his shoes and the audience howled. Maybe I should not have done that but I had grown tired of the complaints.

Another time, at a Bronson rally, Norwood Ishie was M.C. While some law student was speaking in behalf of a state candidate, Ishie and I were approached by an inquisitive elderly citizen, very hard of hearing. He had no way of knowing how loudly he talked. There was a huge crowd and I had a lot of power turned on, so the microphones picked up everything the old fellow said. He would ask us a question and then hand us his pad to write the answer on. We took turns writing on the pad. It went like this.

"Who is that feller up there talking?"

(scribble, scribble)

What's he running fer?"

(scribble, scribble)

Well, does he know what he's talking about?"

At this point, the audience was convulsed with laughter, the speaker paused and looked sternly in our direction. Ishie wrote something hastily on the pad, we scrunched down in our chairs and tried to look as inconspicuous as possible.

At an Otter Creek rally, one fellow was going to build a four lane highway out to Cedar Key, if elected (he lost). At a Cedar Key rally, one candidate's relative became angry and offered to whip the whole crowd.

It was a common practice for the candidates and their supporters to ignore the person speaking and move through the crowd shaking hands and telling jokes. At a Chiefland rally, one candidate told me, "That so-and-so has got more kinfolks out there than I have. When I get up there, turn it up so I can drown out the whole bunch of them (deletedes)."

One M.C. got flustered, he meant to say, next, we would hear from the incumbent. What came out was, "And now, ladies and gentlemen, we hear from the incompetent." Maybe he was right, at that. I wish I had written this as it all happened, now I have forgotten so much of it. Some of the people I mentioned have passed on from this earth. U.S. Congressman Lex Green was right, as he spoke that night at Gulf Hammock so many years ago. He, too, went beyond that sunset.

The Osteen Churn, retrieved in fragments from a sinkhole near the Sol Osteen house site. A young man from Germany whose hobby is antique German ceramics places the churn as having been made in Germany about 1830. It was brought to this country in a sailing ship and bought by the Osteens from some frontier store or trading post. Could be, one day the cat got excited and knocked it off a table. The pieces were tossed into that sinkhole where they lay undisturbed for a hundred years until they were reassembled so that here you are looing at the resurrected Osteen Churn.



The Dental Office of Dr. Eugene H. Yearty (1883-1936) was upstairs when this building was part of Main Street Downtown in old Otter Creek. (Photo by Linden Lindsey.)

BOOK REVIEW

By
Gloria Jahoda

The author had lived near Chicago or New York all her life and was sure that she detested big cities. In 1963, her husband would start a library science research project at Florida State University, so she planned to explore the area, study the wild plants and animals (she is a naturalist), get to know the people and write a book about the whole thing. She did all that and the book should be interesting reading for anyone in this area. I thought it was fascinating.

To consider the matter of perspective, suppose I went up north for a couple of years to collect material for a book on the peculiar natives and their weird cultures. Not for one minute do I forget that I am a southerner and everything I see up there is viewed through my southern-tinted glasses. What would I write about? What else, how the northern social cultures are different from my native one; the differences are to be emphasized, not the similarities, the difference feed reader curiosity and sell books. To my prejudiced eyes, a northern social culture appears cold, harsh, the human values are shallow with no real depth. The rampant materialism is disgusting, etc., the less said about the climate the better.

That is exactly what northern writers do when they come south, and they have done so much that the approach became a tired cliché some time ago. By the way, if you think southerners are intolerant, how well do you think my imaginary book would go over up north?

Ms. Jahoda does the same thing differently. As a naturalist, she scores strongly in descriptive writing of such things as a cypress pond at dawn. As you read the book it becomes evident that the author really understood and loved the wilderness areas. As for the people, she did not do quite as well, although she stands tall above most other writers (with similar backgrounds) in that respect. She does better with historical personages. One of the most interesting parts in the book is the one about Dr. John Gorrie, The Apalachicola inventor of an ice-making machine (seems he was trying to invent an air conditioner).

The title refers to the area from Pensacola east around the big bend south to Cedar Key, the Florida that tourists rush through on their way to the congestion of south Florida. How the author arrived at Cedar Key is interesting. She started from Gainesville, of all places, went west on Route 24, and missed Wilcox! She thought Cedar Key was interesting, but mentions that "its county is sorry". She came through Archer and Bronson, "two picket-fenced hamlets" and apparently never even noticed Otter Creek. Now I am wondering whom she might have seen sitting by the roadside when she passed through Bronson. She didn't

get into Gilchrist County but did make it out to Steinhatchee and Horseshoe, "two sleepy fishing villages". From my own observation, everyone around Steinhatchee appears to be fully awake, especially the hungry types entering the restaurants there.

Back to that sorry county business, remember that Ms. Jahoda wrote what she knew from what she saw and how it seemed to her. I think she was sincere about the whole thing. Remember how dreary her native region looks to me. Except for a few disgruntled types who may have lost in the last election, any Levy County resident will give you ten rapid-fire good reasons why his county is one of the best, likewise in Gilchrist, even more so in Dixie. We must be tolerant and charitable, the lady meant well, she just didn't know any better. In my imaginary book, suppose I said that in Chicago the wind blows so much and the place is so befouled that if one keeps one's eyes and mouth open too long at a time a flying fragment of brick or other debris will blow into the opening which is open, so that is why the people talk so fast with their eyes tightly closed; they are in a hurry to get the mouth closed before something blows into it, sort of an environmental adaptation. Well, the people of Chicago might take a dim view of that. They might say, this southern character means well, he just doesn't know any better. I trust I have made the point.

The book contains a wealth of regional history, particularly about Pensacola, Apalachicola, Wakulla County and Crawfordville. She reports conversations with Mr. Council Register while trying to locate Register's cousin, Yancey Register. Council seems to have been operating a country store in the area north of Steinhatchee. He may still be there. Yancey lived a kind of Huckleberry Finn life and Ms. Jahoda wanted to find out what a hermit thought about life in general. The bunch that hung around Register's store told her that they were appointing her to be an Honorary Cracker, which is about the highest approbation for any Yankee visiting this part of Florida.

What Gloria Jahoda does have going for her is an impressive energy when facing research problems, plus the ability to simply tell a story, or to assemble a straightforward narration. This last skill is not as simple as it may appear. Her writing style varies in tempo from somber contemplation to a lively exuberance. Another William Faulkner she is not, but her book is a must.

You can get a copy at several Gainesville bookstores, the Bronson Town Library has it. From it I learned that the famous naturalist John Muir walked along the railroad from Fernandina Beach to Cedar Key over a hundred years ago. As I write this, I can look out the window and see where he walked.

TO YOUR WAGONS, MEN!

By

S. E. Gunnell

During the course of one's lugubrious pursuit of the bucolic life in this polluted world of crass materialism, one should give occasional pause for contemplation of whatever might be coming down the southbound lane.

My wife and I were rolling sedately toward Chiefland in our little camper when I saw this apparition approaching in the southbound lane. The apparition resolved itself into an unconcerned horse plodding along towing a farm wagon equipped with top bows covered by a bright orange nylon tarp--sort of a covered wagon outfit. Sprawled on the driver's seat was a youngish man with the usual conformist beard. He appeared to be somewhat dejected and even less enthusiastic than the horse. Maybe the horse had a better view.

I noted all this while approaching and my first impulse was sheer admiration for the indomitable courage and intrepid stamina of these young adults. Here they came, interested in the pioneer heritage from their forebearers, they want to go back in time and experience first hand the rigors and adventures of the frontier days and they were living out their fantasy. Good grief, it was overwhelming to contemplate. You are unlikely to see an old geezer like me, from a farm background, deliberately subjecting himself to the jolting ride of a dumb wagon.

So I smiled and waved a neighborly greeting as we passed. It was the least I could do. What I got in return was a sour expression. Man! Talk about being downed! In the rearview mirrors I could see assorted feet dangling from the rear of the wagon.

At first, I thought about the possibility of the Bearded One having Osceola's Revenge or some other affliction which might account for his obvious lack of gregariousness. Maybe someone in Old Town had warned him that Yankees should be wary of drinking the water south of the Suwannee River, he heeded not the warning and was now indulging in self flagellation for having been stupid. Or maybe he was one of those work-nots, have-nots who assume a posture of resentment toward the so-called camper crowd (mine has black and white television only). The horse did not

respond at all to my greeting but at least he maintained a semblance of his equine dignity despite his unhorsy surroundings.

Then it came to me, by the time we got to Chiefland I had it all analyzed. Those people were city types and this big adventure had grown into a drag, not at all what they had expected. They had read all about what they were doing (written mostly by persons who had never done the thing) and they were trying to recreate the atmosphere of the old days. Not quite. If that were the case, there are vast national forests with many trails leading far back into the wilderness. They could have gone there and found the real thing, the natural atmosphere, the quiet and authentic experiences for which they purported to seek.

Instead, they never got off paved highways. They went from one city to the next, obviously seeking attention, needing an audience. My admiration evaporated rapidly. Another thing, somewhat out to the side, why would a backpacker go hiking down a four-laner? Somewhere out west there is a camper park which operates a wagon caravan for those who sincerely want to see what it was like when people traveled that way. They camp out along the trail and never touch civilization for several days. They can smell the horses, the horses can smell them, they hear the sibilant hiss of the iron rims rolling through the sands of the desert, they roll through the cool of the forests, they camp by a little creek, sit by a campfire at night and their fire is the only visible evident of human presence out there, they can hear the eerie howl of a coyote in the night--that's the real thing as nearly as it can be recreated. If I keep going, I might talk myself into going out there and joining that safari and I am supposed to know better. If I did, and my father could see this, I can imagine his comment, something like, his oldest son, supposed to have good sense and all of that, paying out good money for the privilege of riding in a wagon and not even going anywhere.

Last fall in North Carolina, I met a wonderful group of bright-eyed youngsters as they came out of the Appalachian Trail, exhausted, panting, and very happy. Along the long miles of that wilderness trail they had not been attention seekers, they needed no audience. They had gone back in time to yesterday and loved it. So the next time I see an apparition coming down the southbound lane, I will do my best to appear totally unimpressed.

TOOKE

By
Sally Baylor

According to family records and research, the Tooke family arrived in Levy County in the 1840's or 1850's. John Gideon Tooke, who was born in 1834 in Washington County, Georgia, married Chloey Ellen Wilson on Sea Horse Key on September 23, 1854. This date of marriage is the earliest date establishing the Tooke family in Levy County.

The family tree has been traced directly to England. The Tookes arrived in the United States in 1620 and lived in James City County, Virginia. The John Gideon Tooke lineage is:

John Gideon Tooke, born 1834, Washington County, Georgia

Jesse Britt Tooke, born 1810, Northampton County, North Carolina

John Allen Tooke, born 1773, Brunswick County, Virginia

John Tooke, born 1730, Isle of Wight County, Virginia

John Tooke, born 1701, Surrey County, Virginia

John Tooke, Born 1655, Surrey County, Virginia

William Tooke, born 1626, Isle of Wight County, Virginia

James Tooke, born 1597, Hertford, England

The marriage of John Gideon Tooke (1834 - 1884) and Chloey Ellen Wilson (1841 - 1914) is an intriguing one. Chloey Ellen was the daughter of Captain W. H. Wilson, the first lighthouse keeper at Sea Horse Key. At the time of their marriage, the bride was thirteen years old and the groom was twenty. The wedding was held in the lighthouse where the bride's family lived.

During the Civil War, John Gideon served as a Private in Company A, Ninth Florida Infantry, CSA. He worked as a commercial fisherman and as a guide carrying hunting parties into the woods in search of wild game. The couple had seven children: Annie, Mae, Jesse, John William, Virginia, Cora, Sammy. The descendants include: Annie Tooke (married Willie Hamm--Henry Lowe)

Lonnie Hamm

Ida Hamm

Mary Lowe

Arthur Lowe

Eldridge Lowe

Mae Tooke (married Tyler Hodges--Will Hart)

Mabel Hodges

Temple Hodges

Jesse Hodges

Lona Doris Hart

William Hart

Jesse Tooke (married Ada Davis)

Lee Tooke

Roy Tooke

John William Tooke (married Sarah Jane Delanio)

Chloey Ellen Tooke 1890

Agnes Jane Tooke 1892

Martha Esther Tooke 1893

Cora Lee Tooke 1894

George Furney Tooke 1896

John Gideon Tooke 1898

Margaret Tooke 1901

William Tooke 1903

Jesse Britt Tooke 1905

Sarah Virginia Tooke 1906

Annie Mildred Tooke 1909

Naomi Ruth Tooke 1910

unnamed infant 1912

Bernice Delcie Tooke 1914

Elmo Elizabeth Tooke 1916

Virginia Tooke (married Willie McCreary)

Laurie McCreary

Maude McCreary

William McCreary

Ernest McCreary

Pearl McCreary

John McCreary

Cora Tooke (died in infancy)

Sammy Tooke (died in infancy)

Some of the descendants of the families of John William, Jesse, and Mae have remained in the Levy County area. Since more information is available concerning John William, his family will be dealt with more specifically here.

John William Tooke was born in Cedar Key on May 16, 1867. On Christmas Day, in 1889, he married Sarah Jane Delaino. She was fourteen years old and he was twenty-one. He worked as a commercial fisherman, and the couple lived on many of the islands around Cedar Key.

The first home for the couple was a Hotel--Rooming House on Scale Key. They had two rooms rented there, and their first four children were born there--Ellen, Agnes, Esther, and Cora.

During 1895, the family lived for a short time at Shell Mound. Then they moved to Cedar Key. George and John were born at Cedar Key.

In 1899, the family moved to the island of Atsena Otie. They lived there about six years. Their home was a large two-story house on the east end of the island. Margaret and William were born here.

Late in 1904, the family moved back to Cedar Key. The last seven children were born there.

Rental housing at this time, cost from \$1 to \$4 per month. There were no screens at the windows so mosquito netting was used over all of the beds. The wooden floors had to be scrubbed frequently. Woven straw mats were used on the living room floors.

The toilet, of course, was an out-house. Baths were taken outside on the back porch at the pitcher pump. In winter, baths were taken in the living room, using a wash tub beside the wood heater.

Finally, in 1922, the family moved into their own home. The Tooke home was built by Henry Taylor with 'Papa' (John William) and the boys (George, John, William and Jesse) providing much of the labor. The house was built with eight bedrooms, a large living room, dining room and kitchen. The house also included two large porches.

Life was not always easy for the Tooke family. They depended on the Gulf for their livelihood. Fish were salted to use later. Turtle were stored in a 'crawl' to be eaten as needed. Staples were ordered from the Tyler

Grocery Company in Jacksonville and delivered by train. Most items came in cases or barrels. Stewed tomatoes and biscuits were served daily. Left-over food was stored in a dry safe after meals.

At times, school teachers boarded with the family. All of the children attended school at one time or another. The older children worked at the Oyster Houses and Cedar Mills to earn money to pay to attend school. (There was no public school at this time.) Some of their teachers were: Miss Hunt, Miss Cottrell, and Miss Miller.

John William and his sons began building fishing

boats around 1918. They successfully built their own crafts, then began to build for other fishermen. Although the plans were not drawn in detail on paper, their boats were extremely seaworthy and durable. (some of their crafts are still being used today--1985.) The boats designed and built by the Tookes ranged from 5 foot long skiff boat replicas built for young nephews to 60 foot two-cabin fishing boats.

The John William Tooke family is certainly a pioneer family, having earned its living off the land and sea. This family exemplifies very strong ties and supports the concept of 'family as the basis of our society'.



The Tooke Family of Cedar Key, 1907. Back row: Cora (M. Daniel Andrews), Agnes Choley Ellen (called Sister), Martha Ester. Front: John Gidden, Choley Ellen Wilson Tooke (Grandma), holding Sarah Virginia (M. Dr. M. Turner), Margaret Jane (Burned to death at 14), John William (Papa), holding Jesse Britt (called Brick), Furney, George F.

THE SANCHEZ--SHEFFIELD FAMILY

By
Edith L. Graham

The family of Alexander Boneparte Sanchez and his wife Julia Clifford Sheffield are well known residents of Levy County. There are many of their descendants still living in this section.

Alexander was the son of Alexander Boneparte Sanchez and his wife Louisa Colding. He was born in Neunansville, Alachua County, Florida in 1852. He was a nine generation Floridian and a descendant of Francisco Xavier Sanchez of Saint Augustine, Florida. Francisco (1736 - 1807) was considered one of the most wealthy Spainards of Florida at the time of his death. Francisco's son Francis Roman Sanchez lived in Alachua Territory and was president pro tempore of an organization that petitioned the President of the United States in 1812 to make Alachua Territory a part of the United States. He was the grandfather of Alexander Boneparte Sanchez, Jr.

San Filasco Ranch on the bank of the Santa Fe River was the birth place of Alexander Boneparte Sanchez, Sr. He was active in the Second Spanish Indian War and served several tours of military service. He was also a Justice of the Peace for Alachua County in 1938. Alexander Bonaparte Sanchez, Sr. and his wife Louisa Colding were the parents of 10 children. Louisa died March 19, 1865 at Fort Fanning and Alexander died 2 years later at Neunansville. Their oldest son Francis Xavier Sanchez had moved to Judson, Levy County and after the parents' deaths, several of his brothers and sisters also came to Judson.

Alexander Boneparte, Jr. was 14 years younger than Francis X. and worked as a farm hand for his brother and neighbors. He later purchased his own farm at Judson. In 1873 he met and courted Julia Clifford Sheffield. Clifford was the daughter of Simeon Sheffield and his wife Elizabeth Yawn. Simeon was a well known preacher in Florida and established the Pine Grove Baptist Church at Judson in 1871. The Simeon Sheffields had 10 children. Many of those children grew up and continued to live in Levy County. Several sons became preachers in the section. They were James Knox Sheffield, Sidney Ward Sheffield and Isaac Smith Coon Sheffield.

Alexander Boneparte Sanchez, Jr. and Clifford had 9 children. Two sons became medical doctors and one a dentist. The children were Eoline Elizabeth born January 29, 1874 died August 29, 1898 married J. E. Rush.

Martha Emma born October 15, 1876 died December 30, 1882 age 6 years

Simeon Edward born November 6, 1878 died July 16, 1946 married Catherine Key. He was a medical doctor and owned and operated a hospital at Barwick, Georgia
Rella born February 16, 1881 died 1968 married George Washington Polk

Azzie Clifford born April 3, 1892 died September 19, 1970 married W. B. Lindsey

Raymond Roman born September 2, 1885 died February 4, 1966 married Lillian McElroy. He was a dentist at Trenton, Florida.

Butler Hall, born August 9, 1887 died September 21, 1938 married Jeanette Simpson. He was a medical doctor and practiced at Plant City, Florida.

Ludie Celeste born November 2, 1889 died April 12, 1938 married Fredrick Bowlan

Orlando Clyatt born April 9, 1894 died February 20, 1894

Alexander Boneparte Sanchez, Jr. had a younger sister Delia who married Joseph Sealey Sheffield. He was an older brother of Clifford and son of Simeon Sheffield. Delia was born June 9, 1856 in Neunansville and Joseph was born July 20, 1850 near Branford, Florida. Joseph and Delia moved to Georgia, then Bradenton, Florida. They still have descendants in Marion and Manatee Counties.

Francis Xavier Sanchez was the older brother of Alexander, Jr. and one of the first of the Sanchez family to live in Levy County and later he moved to Sumter County. His children were Rubin Randolph, Samuel, Saule, Jude, Zyalphia Ponchetta, Ann Palzetta (twins) and Lu. Many of their descendants live in central Florida.

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Alexander Boneparte Sanchez, Jr., in 1930, the year he died. He was a brother of Delia Sanchez Sheffield.



Alexander Boneparte Sanchez, Jr., and Wife Julia Clifford Sheffield, probably their wedding picture, about 1869. From a tintype.



John and Addie Smith, daughter Corinne. They were Doc Smith's parents, John was Hampton Smith's son. Addie's original name was Precious Addie Hurst. Leeann Sims, daughter of Henry and Ann Sims, is a sixth generation descendant of the Levy County Pioneer, Hampton Smith. Picture was made about 70 years ago. Photo courtesy of Mac McKoy.

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